DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 004 FL 025 328

AUTHOR Wintergerst, Ann C., Ed.
TITLE Focus on Self-Study: Evaluating Postsecondary ESOL Programs.
INSTITUTION Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., Alexandria, VA.
ISBN ISBN-0-939791-59-5
PUB DATE 1995-00-00
NOTE 116p.; Out of print.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - General (020) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Consultants; *English (Second Language); Higher Education; *Institutional Research; Program Evaluation; Research Methodology; Second Language Programs; *Self Evaluation (Groups)

ABSTRACT

The guide to self-study of programs teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) contains a series of essays on aspects of the self-study process and products. "Part One: Insights into the Self-Study Process" includes the following articles: "The TESOL Self-Study Program" (Ann C. Wintergerst, Carol J. Kreidler); and "Undertaking a TESOL Self-Study" (Teresa D. O'Donnell). "Part Two: TESOL Self-Study Program Reports" includes the following articles: "Taking on the Challenges of Self-Study" (Alexandra Rowe Henry, Jim Hamrick, Karen Porter); "Program Ownership through Self-Study Involvement" (Norman Evans); "Anatomy of a Self-Study: On-Site Consultants" (Susan Carkin); and "Academic Program Review: A Focused Self-Study" (Carol Numrich, Frances Boyd, Mary Jerome). "Part Three: Helpful Hints" includes the following suggestions: "Do's and Don'ts for Conducting a Self-Study"; and "Further Reading." (Contains 37 references. (MSE)

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Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

Focus on Self-Study

Evaluating Postsecondary ESOL Programs

Ann C. Wintergerst
Editor

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A TESOL Field Services Publication

L025328

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ISBN 0-939791-59-5

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all ESOL teachers and administrators who continue to strive for professional equity and quality programs in a system where professional acceptance has not been fully achieved.

Preface

The Committee on Professional Standards (CPS) has continued to address the needs and concerns of the TESOL membership. During my term as chair of CPS' Self-study Subcommittee, English as a Second/Foreign Language Programs were actively endorsing TESOL's *Statement of Core Standards for TESOL and TESOL Professional Preparation Programs*, the first step in TESOL's Self-study Program. Despite their enthusiasm, however, fewer than ten programs had completed a TESOL Self-study. Some indicated a lack of knowledge about the process — how to initiate, proceed, and complete a self-study. Others mentioned the need for more clarity of the self-study questions and requested assistance from ESOL professionals who had conducted a self-study. This volume was developed in response to these needs.

Programs that had undertaken a TESOL Self-study were invited to submit papers on their self-study encounters. Of these programs, some submitted articles describing their experiences and sharing their successes and failures with the self-study process. Of these, four have been included in this volume: the English Programs for Internationals of the University of South Carolina; the English Language Institute of Brigham Young University-Hawaii; the Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University; and the American Language Progam at Columbia University, New York.

I am grateful to all the contributors to this volume as are the many ESOL professionals who will benefit from their experiences. I thank Terry O'Donnell, TESOL's Director of Field Services, for her support in getting this publication into print. I also wish to acknowledge the technical assistance of Mark Quigley, Training Specialist, St. John's University's Faculty Support Center, for his invaluable computer expertise.

Ann C. Wintergerst
St. John's University
New York
August 1994

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Introduction

Ann C. Wintergerst

Self-study has been part of TESOL's agenda for many years. In an attempt to encourage quality control and program excellence, *Focus On Self-study* features the experiences of fellow ESOL professionals as they conducted their self-studies and presents their views on selected aspects of the self-study process. This volume offers practical answers to often asked questions by programs considering a self-study or planning a program review. It also familiarizes potential purchasers of the TESOL self-study materials with TESOL's self-study program.

The chapters in this volume are in response to an expressed need voiced by the TESOL membership and include the development of TESOL's self-study program and TESOL's role in the process. The self-study program reports present the challenges of the process, program ownership resulting from the self-study experience, the role of on-site consultants, and the completion of a comprehensive/focused self-study. Suggestions for conducting a self-study and for further readings are also offered.

The volume is divided into three parts. The two chapters in Part One: Insights into the Self-study Process, provide an overview of TESOL's role in the self-study process.

In the first chapter, "The TESOL Self-study Program," Wintergerst and Kreidler describe how TESOL, influenced by the deplorable employment conditions of the times, began to initiate a system of program improvement through its self-study program. Whether a comprehensive or focused self-study is undertaken, ESOL programs are urged to consider the purposes, attributes, and models of program evaluation appropriate to their circumstances. This chapter addresses these and other aspects of self-study, the steps involved in its coordination, the benefits derived, and TESOL's self-study survey. Wintergerst and Kreidler conclude by presenting self-study as an ongoing exploratory process of self-assessment, by encouraging accrediting agencies to focus not only on the product of self-study but also on the processes involved, and by highlighting TESOL's continued role.

In the second chapter, "Undertaking a TESOL Self-study," O'Donnell describes how a program, faculty, administration, and institution can benefit from a TESOL Self-study. Faculty and administrators in programs that have undergone a TESOL Self-study acclaim the rewards it brings. However, undertaking the

study can be an intimidating task at first. Getting started and planning the process well are crucial for a program to reap the benefits resulting from a well-done study. She suggests ways to get started, to carry out the study, and to write the final report. O'Donnell encourages programs commencing a self-study to seek support and review of preliminary reports from TESOL professionals experienced in the self-study process.

The four chapters contained in "Part Two: TESOL Self-study program Reports," offer a composite of program-specific self-study experiences that may be applicable to other postsecondary ESOL programs.

In the first chapter,"Taking on the Challenges of Self-study," Henry, Hamrick, and Porter report the experiences of the English Programs for Internationals of the Univesity of South Carolina focusing on the self-study process, particularly the strategies devised to meet the challenges of this massive undertaking. These strategies address project management, including personnel and equipment used, and procedures which enabled the program to complete the self-study in nine months. Henry, Hamrick, and Porter also discuss the positive and negative by-products of the self-study process and conclude that the TESOL self-study results in many long-lasting programmatic gains, especially the validation of a program's worth within its immediate context and the profession.

In the next chapter, "Program Ownership Through Self-study Involvement," Evans asserts that a self-study should ideally be the product of many, if not all, the people involved with the program. He presents the process that the English Language Institute of Brigham Young University-Hawaii followed to increase participation in its self-study. Evans describes how the self-study was structured to encourage participation from everyone, even those remotely involved with the Institute, during all phases of the study and how this extensive participation has increased understanding and support of the Institute's faculty, students, and curriculum.

In the following chapter, "Anatomy of A Self-study: On-site Consultants," Carkin affirms the crucial role that consultants play in a TESOL self-study and describes the selection procedure for the on-site review team used at the Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University. She discusses the motivation for the self-study, how the TESOL self-study questions are used as a framework for inquiry and to gather data throughout the university. Carkin presents several concrete consequences of the TESOL self-study and the consultants' visit.

In the last chapter in this section, "Academic Program Review: A Focused Self-study," Numrich, Boyd, and Jerome offer insights into academic program review, emphasizing the concept of a focused self-study with their three-phase research process lasting for four years. They discuss a number of changes made in the American Language Program at Columbia University as a result of extensive data collection using several research models and from the self-study process itself. They also emphasize the even greater impact of the secondary results. Numrich, Boyd, and Jerome present their self-study in the context of the self-study attributes cited in the literature.

The final section of this volume, Part Three: Helpful Hints, includes a chapter "Do's and Don'ts for Conducting a Self-study," which offers useful suggestions when undertaking a self-study. This chapter is followed by "Further Reading," which includes a listing of practical readings to further explore the self-study process or program evaluation.

Self-study is a timely topic for TESOL professionals. As the profession strives for equity, credibility, and accountability, TESOL continues to lead the field in trying to achieve these goals. It is hoped that the present volume will expedite those efforts.

PART ONE:

INSIGHTS INTO THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

1 The TESOL Self-study Program

Ann C. Wintergerst, St. John's University
Carol J. Kreidler, Georgetown University

"Know thyself," a quotation that appears on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, is a fitting adage for the self-study program developed by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). In some ways it is the raison d'etre for the program as it exists today. To understand how TESOL's program of self-study has evolved, it is necessary to understand the times in which the self-study program began.

Background

In the early 1980s, the number of foreign students coming to the United States for an education and the number of ESOL programs were increasing rapidly. In its 1982 publication, *Open Doors*, the Institute of International Education counted the intensive English programs (IEPs) that existed in the late 1970s and found that these programs nearly doubled from 1978 to 1981. With the rapid growth in the number of IEPs, members of TESOL expressed concern about the quality of these programs and the persons employed to teach in them. The low esteem in which many programs were held by their parent organizations coupled with the lack of job security of many ESOL teachers were further reasons for concern.

In her article, "Employment Scene: Do We Fiddle While Rome Burns?," Goldberg (1979) compared the oversupply of ESOL teachers to the plight of their immigrant grandparents. Both were at the mercy of their employers and both were inadequately compensated. After mentioning the large number of teachers produced each year by local universities, she concluded that there were few jobs, low pay, and nonexistent job security. She wondered whether anything would be done to remedy this situation and whether anyone really cared. Although there are still too many

ESOL professionals in this predicament, TESOL has demonstrated its concern through its work on employment issues and professional standards.

With the increase in the number of English language programs and the deplorable employment conditions in the late 1970s, TESOL realized the need to develop a system for program improvement and began setting program standards for the profession. In the early 1980s, the Executive Board recommended that the newly formed Committee on Professional Standards (CPS) be charged with the task of studying the accreditation of postsecondary programs of English as a foreign language. Standards were needed by which programs could measure themselves. Standards were needed which would enhance the status of the profession — a profession which desperately needed enhancing. An indication of its early interest, TESOL sponsored a conference through its CPS where its members talked with representatives from various organizations working on standards for their professions. However, due to the possibilities of law suits, the expense of setting up an accrediting agency, and the excessive number of agencies already accrediting a university, TESOL was advised to find other means of policing itself.

The CPS learned of the work of Herbert Kells (1983), a self-study expert who was instrumental in designing and implementing the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs' (NAFSA's) program of self-study. NAFSA: Association of International Educators, a nonprofit membership organization that provides training, information, and other educational services to professionals in the field of international exchange, developed a complete program of self-regulation which "is much more than a set of principles or standards" (NAFSA, 1983, p. 5). The NAFSA program includes the endorsement of the program by the NAFSA Board; the formulation and endorsement of a statement of standards to guide institutions or programs; the formulation and publication of a self-study guide and the establishment of a cadre of consultants to assist institutions using the guide in designing, organizing, and conducting a useful self-study; the addition of an expert professional to the NAFSA staff; the creation of a program of volunteer peer visits to complement self-study; the development of a working relationship with regional accrediting agencies; the

development of a voluntary peer recognition process for those conducting a self-study with the subsequent filing of a report with the NAFSA Central Office; and the development of a program for referral of complaints to be guided by legal counsel.

TESOL's self-study program was modeled after the program Kells established for NAFSA. The CPS agreed that Kells's suggestions were fitting and that programs should be allowed to study themselves guided by standards which TESOL supported. This would improve both programs and working conditions, it was hoped. A program of self-regulation through self-study was recommended by the CPS to the Executive Board. In 1982, TESOL devised a system of program regulation through the process of self-study. By 1986, it had developed a two-step process: a statement of core standards and a set of materials outlining the process of self-study for those programs that had endorsed its standards.

An early task of the CPS was the development of standards of good practice for the kinds of programs that make up the organization of TESOL. First to be developed and published were core standards — a set of general statements which TESOL believes to be inherent in any quality program. This *Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs* (1985) is a six-page document that explains the general attributes and basic tenets which characterize quality programs designed to teach ESOL and to prepare professionals in the field. Seven years later, the CPS developed the *TESOL Core Standards for English as a Foreign Language/English as an International Language Programs* (19912) to meet the needs and concerns of non-U.S.-based programs. The standards must be endorsed by a program as the first step in the TESOL Self-study process. With this endorsement, a program agrees with what TESOL believes represents good practice. The program can then hold its administrative officers responsible for the implementation of policies of good practice.

A program undergoing self-study may address one or all of the five key areas contained in the *Core Standards* and featured in a quality ESOL program: statement of purpose and goals, program structure, program curriculum, program implementation, and program assessment. Based on the notion that program

improvement results from self-study, TESOL developed a series of questions that a program might ask itself. These questions evolved from the *Core Standards* and were much more specific but somewhat different for each level — elementary and secondary, adult, postsecondary, and teacher training. They serve as a basis for analysis and review of the organization and operation of a program. TESOL's *Standards and Self-Study Questions for Postsecondary Programs* (1986) is an example of the materials developed for each of these levels in order to provide guidance on the process of program review through self-evaluation.

Types of Self-study

Most self-studies are undertaken with the idea of program improvement as their goal. A self-study may be comprehensive (complete) or focused (narrow). There is no substitute for a comprehensive self-study which addresses each of the five major areas inherent in a quality ESOL program as described in the TESOL *Core Standards*. A comprehensive self-study was conducted by the English Programs for Internationals of the University of South Carolina, the English Language Institute of Brigham Young University-Hawaii, and the Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University. However, not all institutions can spend the time or resources necessary on a comprehensive self-study of a program — one that is extremely detailed or presents an overview of *all* the areas over an extended period of time. Instead, an institution may conduct a focused self-study — one that explores one or more areas in depth which the institution finds useful to study. The American Language Program at Columbia University conducted a focused self-study examining its courses, its student resources, and the stakeholders' viewpoint. Though not a comprehensive self-study, much can be learned from applying the techniques of the self-study process to the perceived needs of a program. In fact, a series of focused self-studies can often form a prelude to a comprehensive self-study.

A few years ago, a well-known program underwent a comprehensive self-study, recommending a number of changes that were not or could not be carried out since not everyone had "bought into" the process. It was then decided to focus on only

one area annually, trying to get the mechanism in place for a comprehensive self-study in the future. Entrance and exit testing, learning resources, and student services were possible areas for such a focused self-study. The goals of the self-study were clearly stated, outside resources were effectively utilized, and the members of the faculty worked together offering recommendations. Thus, some of the benefits of self-study were accrued. What is noteworthy is that program standards were established at the institution and an effort was made to initiate the self-study process so it would be useful.

Whether a program opts to evaluate curriculum process and content, the noninstructional aspects of the program, or the performance of teachers and administrators (see Pennington, 1991), the key to program evaluation resides not only in the results but also in the process of the self-study. In short, a program must develop its own procedures to meet its own goals — goals which need to be realistic and manageable.

Purposes of Self-study

In her dissertation review of the literature on academic program review, Jerome (1991) highlights three broad categories of purposes for self-study: program improvement, resource reallocation or discontinuance, and the accreditation process. The first two categories are related to institutional review while the last deals with the use of the self-study results in the accreditation process. According to Kells (1988), the purposes for overall program improvement include: helping institutions and programs improve; incorporating self-study into the life of the institution or program through ongoing, useful, institutional research and self-analysis; preceding and becoming the foundation for all planning efforts; using the self-study processes as an effective orientation for recently hired staff members; using the self-study processes to narrow the gap that often exists between personal and organizational goals; enhancing institutional openness; identifying important, vigorous, and committed new leaders; and using self-study to stimulate the often neglected review of policies, practices, procedures, and records. Though many institutions have tried to combine two purposes — that of program and institutional

improvement with that of resource reallocation or discontinuance — within one review process, such a combination is not in the best interest of an institution. With reference to the third category of being part of an accreditation process, self-study provides the mechanism for a complete assessment of how the program or institution meets accreditation standards.

Jerome notes that Cranton and Legge (1978) view the three major purposes of self-study as two review processes: formative and summative. In a formative review process, the process of the study is as important as the final report: It is internally motivated, and it is usually organized by the faculty. In addition to the process itself, its major goal is service to the department, the students, the institution, and the discipline. In a summative review process, the definition of goals and the degree of their attainment are the primary purposes, and it is often externally motivated with the help of an outside evaluator. The goal of this type of self-study is accountability. Many self-studies feature an internal formative review followed by a more summative external follow-up, while others incorporate elements of both.

Attributes of Self-study

An important attribute of a self-study is that the program or institution directly involved in the self-study is the impetus behind it and not necessarily an outside source (e.g., an accrediting agency or State Board of Regents). An internally motivated self-study results from a desire to improve the academic status of a program or from a professional commitment to the field. It is undertaken with a clear purpose in mind and an internal motivation to succeed.

Jerome's review of the self-study literature shows that the most highly regarded attribute for a successful self-study is that it involves the active participation of everyone connected with the program evaluated (Barak & Breier, 1990; Cochran & Hengstler, 1984; Conner & Hendricks, 1989). This includes not only representative participation by the institution housing the program but also participation by the faculty who must be a part of the review process. One effective way to foster a high level of participation is to conduct a self-study using a modified

"committee of the whole" (Kells, 1988, p. 108) technique rather than relying on a series of committees. Such a committee encourages more involvement in the self-study process by faculty, administrators, staff, and students. It also generates a feeling of participatory decision making and inclusiveness.

Another attribute for a successful self-study is a commitment to the process by the top leadership. An unwavering level of support for the evaluation process not only from the program director but also from key administrators at the institution is essential. Barak and Breier as well as Cochran and Hengstler contend that the acceptance and strong support of key decision-makers is one way to insure the proper climate for self-study, while Miller (1988) warns that weak, indecisive leadership or token support can result in its failure. Having the top leadership support the self-study process is crucial for its success; having the process well led is of equal importance.

An additional factor that contributes to a successful self-study involves keeping both formal and informal channels of communication open. Presenting findings in a timely fashion, meeting to discuss follow-up phases, communicating results discovered, and evaluating the process itself are integral parts of the self-study process. Such a *metareview* can often revitalize a self-study by incorporating needed changes. Wilson (1984) suggests the use of a strategy for providing continuous feedback regarding the usefulness of self-study, a suggestion with which Barak and Breier (1990) agree in order to keep the self-study process from becoming outdated. Thus, a successful self-study features program improvement both during and after the process as well as a readable report and ongoing research resulting from the process. These attributes, though not exhaustive, are desirable in a self-study.

Models of Program Evaluation

Conrad and Wilson (in Jerome, 1991) categorize the various models of program evaluation into four broad types. The models used to evaluate programs are critical since an evaluation model provides the framework for evaluation, gives shape to the research questions, focuses the evaluation, and informs the inquiry

process.

The first model of program evaluation, used by most colleges and universities, is the goal-based model. A goal-based model identifies program goals, objectives, and standards by using various instruments to measure performance and then comparing the collected data against the declared objectives to determine the degree of congruence. This evaluation model may be formative with the goal of program improvement in mind or summative with the goal of making program decisions.

The second model of program evaluation, which is a goal-free model, is the responsive model. This particular model concentrates on the participants' needs and concerns or on program activities rather than on any stated goals. The main focus of the goal-free evaluation model is on the process of the self-study itself.

The third model of program evaluation is the decision-making model. Conrad and Wilson found that neither the goals and objectives nor the concerns and issues of the participants are a central component of this model. Since different types of decisions require different kinds of information in a program, more than one type of evaluation is needed. Jerome (1991) mentions four types of evaluations tied to four types of decisions: context evaluation — assisting in determining goals; input evaluation — offering alternatives; process evaluation — giving feedback; and product evaluation — rendering information about continuing, modifying, or discontinuing a program.

The fourth model of program evaluation, often used in higher education, is the connoisseurship model. The expert or connoisseur guides the evaluation, gathers the data, and makes interpretations and judgments. Conrad and Wilson note that the standards and criteria used in making a judgment stem from his/her connoisseur's experience as a professional and from the collective experience of the profession. This evaluation model may be used with the goal-based model and the responsive model, especially in the final stages of the self-study where the invited expert not only reviews the data and the reports generated by the evaluation process but also the process itself. It is important to remember that whatever model of program evaluation is selected, the design should be appropriate to the program's circumstances.

Coordination of Self-study

Whether following the guidelines developed by TESOL, or those initiated by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, the coordination of the self-study process provides similar results even though the number of steps may vary.

The coordination of the self-study process according to TESOL's guidelines involves three major steps with multiple substeps. The first step is the design stage. Here, the coordinator and steering committee members are selected. TESOL's *Core Standards* and its *Manual of Self-study for TESOL and TESOL Preparation Programs* are obtained. Interest of top leaders is determined. Issues, needs, and problems are defined. Goals are stated. Data availability is ascertained. Other participants are secured. Training needs are designed.

The second step is the organization stage. Here, program strengths and weaknesses are considered in light of TESOL's standards. The study is coordinated with any other larger study. Key insiders, outsiders, and consultants are selected. Orientation is planned and training organized as needed. Tasks are determined and responsibilities for work groups are delineated. Resources are sought and a schedule is decided upon.

The third and final step is conducting the self-study stage. Here, work is divided for staff support of faculty study. Work is carried out in appropriate sequences. Changes immediately possible, without waiting to the end of the study, are implemented. In this stage, TESOL's standards are reviewed; goals are not only reviewed but also revised and clarified. Other participants, key insiders, outsiders, and consultants are involved. Staff work is appropriated as needed at various stages of the process. Available data is collected, reviewed, and analyzed. Work groups are in session. Individual work is being done. Consultants participate. Trips are arranged as needed. Preliminary reports are circulated to other members of the work group. Additional data is collected. Data is discussed and a report is drafted. A mechanism for change is planned. The report is disseminated. Commitments are secured. Strategies for change are implemented. Changes are monitored. A mechanism for establishing on-going self-study is devised. New goals and programs are developed. Projections are made for the

future.

Whether the TESOL guidelines, the NAFSA guidelines, or any other resources are used, the self-study team recognizes the intrinsic value of the coordinated self-study process and the end product resulting from this process. The participants realize that self-study is on-going and that the final report is not the end but the beginning of a cyclical process of continuous program improvement and program change.

Benefits of Self-study

The benefits derived from self-study are numerous (see NAFSA's 1983 *Guide* and TESOL's 1989 *Self-study Manual*). By far the most important benefit is that of program improvement. Goals can be better clarified and problems or potential problems identified. TESOL maintains that if a program begins to identify the strengths on which to build and the weaknesses on which to improve, the program undergoing self-study will be able to initiate a commitment to change leading to program improvement.

In addition to the obvious value of program improvement, programs develop a more collegial working environment as a result of self-study. The staff generates a togetherness which may have been lacking. Not only is cooperation encouraged but also a strong harmonious working relationship. Such internal harmony improves communication patterns and is essential if the self-study processes are to be realized to the fullest extent.

Another benefit of self-study is its use as a basis for evaluating existing programs to determine how they meet TESOL's *Core Standards* and for designing new programs. The TESOL standards provide a yardstick by which a program can measure itself in its attempt to deliver quality instruction. Addressing the five major features inherent in a quality ESOL program will guide administrators in the planning of new programs. ESOL programs continue to be established at institutions by administrators unfamiliar with language teaching methodologies, language learning, and program development. These administrators may not realize the scope of an ESOL program nor the needs of their prospective student populations, ranging from international students to immigrants to bilinguals with linguistic and cultural diversity.

Some may not have taught ESOL nor are they professionally prepared for the field. Their task to design and to implement an ESOL program from curriculum to assessment is more readily accomplished using TESOL's standards to establish a program. So, too, trained ESOL teachers turned administrators will find the standards a useful resource when confronted with the same task.

An added benefit of self-study is that the mechanism for collecting data is in place when the self-study is completed. With only slight modifications, data can be collected annually as is the case with the Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University. Self-studies often lack the data necessary to review programs, their policies, practices, and procedures but once the mechanism is in place, the task becomes less onerous. The data is also useful in explaining the program to another organization, to the parent institution, or to program reviewers. It also serves as a model for others and generates life into the program.

Last but not least, self-study brings recognition to a program within the institution it operates or within the ESOL field. This is the case with the English Language Institute at Brigham Young University-Hawaii, where the faculty members in other departments were impressed by the ELI's self-study report which not only brought it greater visibility but also oriented others to the Institute.

TESOL Self-study Survey

In 1991, a self-study questionnaire was devised and distributed by TESOL's Department of Field Services to survey the programs that had purchased the self-study materials (see Wintergerst, 1992). One of the findings revealed that more than half of the respondents purchased the materials to help their program. This was followed by the need to learn more about TESOL's self-study service. Additional reasons for purchasing the materials were to persuade others to commit to self-study, to use the materials as a teacher training resource, as a guideline to establish a new program, and as a resource during a review by an external authority in the context of a program accreditation. Other comments ranged from attaining program respectability to evaluating a program. In short, the needs are varied and the

reasons are program specific.

The respondents further indicated that their reported self-study process ranged from 2 months to 3 years. The individuals who requested the TESOL self-study materials found them helpful since they provided guidelines, offered standards, provoked discussion and reflection, guided program administration, and raised issues. These reasons underscore why the TESOL self-study materials were not prepared in the format of a checklist simply to be completed and returned for review, despite such a request from the majority. The respondents also noted the need for a fee-based validation visit by a TESOL professional as part of the self-study process and the need for a fee-based accreditation program which would include a self-study report and a validation visit.

Conclusion

In the past, only some useful self-study was found at the program or departmental level across fields in American institutions. Kells (1983) points out that two influences have created some change in this circumstance. The first influence is that large research universities have increased their use of cyclical departmental reviews in a 5-year cycle, involving at least a descriptive study by the local unit and a team of visitors from sister departments at similar institutions. The second influence is the presence of specialized accreditation disciplines at some large universities and heavily career-oriented colleges. As a result, more useful self-study is occurring and becoming more widespread.

Periodic self-study conducted as part of the usual management cycle of a program and not related to any outside agency is the ideal situation. Most program self-study attempts, however, continue to be made in response to a request from an agency rather than being internally motivated. The end result is the same — a final report, which if it is to be useful, includes a listing of what the institution or program should achieve or change in the next 2 to 3 years. It also indicates the strategies necessary to accomplish the changes, records the roles expected of indidviduals and groups, and suggests a plan of action. Self-study is an ongoing exploratory process of self-assessment in which a program looks at itself objectively, reports its findings both positive and negative,

and initiates action to eliminate the weaknesses and to capitalize on the strengths discovered during the process. It is hoped that systematic study and planned change will become a way of life for ESOL programs and TESOL professional preparation programs (*TESOL's Self-study Manual*, 1989).

Institutions must insist that accrediting agencies focus on self-study processes as part of the accrediting process. Since a nationally recognized code of good practice in accrediting which calls for appeal procedures, due process, and trained personnel exists, accreditation can be a very useful process. Though a lack of continuing institutional research and a low level of momentum for improved management may result after a self-study, the self-study processes can be used for solid program planning. These processes not only generate change and improvement on a campus, but they also spur ongoing study, enabling programs to gain new insights and to share their experiences with others.

TESOL prides itself on being an international professional organization whose mission is to strengthen the effective teaching and learning of English around the world while respecting individuals' language rights. As the professional organization of ESOL teachers, administrators, researchers, teacher trainers, and students worldwide, TESOL continues to strive to raise the professional status of the ESOL field. One avenue through which this is being accomplished is its program of self-study. Knowledge leads to self-improvement, and in the words of Francis Bacon, "Knowledge itself is power" (in Evans, 1969, p. 369).

2 Undertaking a TESOL Self-study

Teresa D. O'Donnell, TESOL Central Office

TESOL's program of regulation through self-study has several purposes. By requiring a critical analysis of an existing program, a self-study should affect changes that result in improvement of the program. At the same time, it should establish mechanisms and systems for data collection, analysis, and problem solving that permit ongoing self-evaluation. In addition, it should allow a program to assess how well it meets the standards as outlined in TESOL's (1985) *Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs*. In the process, a TESOL self-study brings faculty and staff together to work on a project that enhances openness and group interaction. While recognition may not be the program's purpose for undergoing the self-study, it can often provide a visible acknowledgment of the quality of the language program or the teacher preparation program within the institution or professional community.

TESOL's self-study program is a process that involves all members of a program, from the administrator, teachers, and support staff to the students the program serves. It is intended to help programs clarify goals, review procedures and practices, analyze resources, and identify strengths and weaknesses. It requires programs to establish a plan for program improvement and ongoing review. When done well, a TESOL self-study is a process that allows a program to analyze its programmatic health on a continuous basis. TESOL supports programs undertaking a self-study before, during, and at the end of the process by offering advice to programs planning a self-study, giving feedback once the study is in progress, reviewing final reports, and recommending consultants.

Getting Started

After purchasing and reviewing the appropriate self-study materials and the *Manual of Self-Study for TESOL and TESOL*

Professional Preparation Programs (1989), a program considering a TESOL self-study will want to appoint a preliminary self-study team or steering committee. As a first step, the committee should consider the characteristics that are necessary for any self-study to be effective.

The most successful self-study is internally motivated. If an outside agent is promoting the self-study, faculty may resent the intrusion on their time and autonomy. If faculty can be convinced of the value of programmatic self-study and are involved in the planning of the study, the process is likely to be more productive. On the other hand, sometimes a faculty-initiated self-study does not have initial administrative support, which is very important. Top administrators have the ability to grant the faculty and staff the time and resources to carry out a successful program review, so faculty may need to convince administrators of the value of a TESOL self-study as a way to enhance the health of a program. Once their support is gained, it is best if it is stated in writing. Without this documented support, faculty may find that if the administration of the program changes, the new administration may not understand the value of the review and may even refuse to support its continuation.

After the support is gained and the team decides to proceed with the program of self-study, members of the committee will have to address some important questions that have consequences for the design of the study:

1. Why is the program undertaking the self-study? Is it internally or externally motivated? Is it required by the administration? Is it required for outside accreditation?

2. What form will the study take? Will it be a comprehensive (complete) study that addresses all of the TESOL questions, or will it be a "focused" (narrow) study that addresses only one or two goals?

3. Who will perform the self-study? Will there be a combination of full-time and part-time faculty involved? Will administrators or faculty lead the study? Will all or only part of the faculty and staff be involved?

4. How much time will faculty be given to work on the self-study? Will released time be granted? Will faculty and staff involvement be ongoing or sequenced?

5. How much time can be committed to the study? One day a week, several days a month? How many years can the program commit to the study?

6. Will other materials be needed to supplement TESOL's self-study program? Are there institutional or regional accreditation requirements that must be met?

7. What kind of documentation will be required? What should the final report look like? Who will need to receive it?

A TESOL self-study is not merely a description of the program. It is a program evaluation that must be based on data collection and critical review. The design must take into account the special features, resources, and needs of the program while at the same time focusing on the program standards set by TESOL. The self-study committee must decide what basic information will be needed, how data can be collected, and what the timeline for the study might be. They will need to consider what other faculty and staff at the institution should be involved in the process. Some programs, especially smaller ones, may decide that conducting a complete TESOL self-study will not be possible, due to a lack of sufficient personnel to share the various tasks. They may decide to do a focused self-study on only one goal and at a later date work on another goal.

During preliminary discussions, it will become clear that one person should be appointed to coordinate the program's efforts and lead the design of the study. This does not necessarily have to be the program administrator but should be someone with good organizational skills. In these early stages of discussion, the self-study committee may also find it helpful to talk with other TESOL professionals who have been involved in the self-study process at their own institutions and to consult with TESOL Central Office.

Conducting the Study

Once the study is designed, the various team members should be assigned tasks to carry out related to the five major areas of self-study: program purpose and goals; program structure; curriculum; program implementation; and program assessment. (In a focused self-study, some of these areas may not be addressed.) Major tasks will include, among others, reviewing records, gathering data and facts, posing questions, seeking opinions, and discussing new ideas. In some cases, studies may need to be conducted in order to collect reliable data. After the necessary data is collected, committee members will begin to compile answers to the self-study questions. Much of the work may be done by appointed individuals of the committee, but periodic meetings will be important as the group begins to gather answers to the self-study questions, identify strengths of the program, and pinpoint their concerns. The group interaction at these meetings will be crucial as the committee begins to make recommendations, plans an implementation schedule, and drafts its final report.

In a large program where only some staff members are part of the self-study team, the committee's findings and preliminary report drafts should be presented to all faculty and staff for review, comment, and approval. Some programs have held lunchtime sessions or retreats where the committee's recommendations are discussed. The coordinator can then use the additional comments in editing a final draft. All faculty should be involved in the design of the self-study implementation schedule, which involves prioritizing concerns and recommendations in each review area, identifying a person responsible for the recommendation, and setting a target completion date. Some programs have found it effective to implement the suggested changes immediately since the self-study process is ongoing. Because of the needed involvement of the entire faculty, internal motivation for the study is crucial.

Preparing the Self-study Report

A final report is part of any effective self-study process and should be made an integral part of the overall plan. It is the result

of the work of the various parts of the committee and is usually compiled by the coordinator. At the time the final report is submitted, the program has completed the major part of its self-study, minus any planned follow-up activities. In addition to documenting the process and the results of the program's internal self-study, the report can provide information for the broader institution as a whole. It can also be used by evaluation teams and shared with other audiences such as state agencies, departments of education, community leaders, and accrediting agencies, among others.

Programs may decide to submit a copy of the final report to TESOL, although this is not a requirement. When a self-study report is submitted, the Chair of the Committee on Professional Standards (CPS), another designated member with expertise in the program level represented in the report, and the Director of Field Services at Central Office review the document. Their role is not to evaluate the program that has submitted the report but rather to evaluate the quality of the self-study as evidenced in the final report. Because the process of the study and the involvement of the program administration and staff are major factors in TESOL's Self-study program, the final written report itself becomes less important.

If a report is submitted to TESOL and reviewers find that the program has completed a successful self-study, the program is awarded a certificate. To receive a TESOL certificate, the report must have several characteristics. It should be a well-organized, concise essay that covers the key issues addressed by the self-study committee, the administrative staff, and the faculty. Although it may include extended discussion of the TESOL self-study questions, it should be more than a mere listing of the answers to these questions. It should be a discussion of the findings and must include a section that defines the strengths and concerns (weaknesses) of the program, recommendations for change and improvement, and strategies (with a timeline) for implementation of recommendations. Most importantly, the report should reflect the involvement of the program's administrative staff and faculty as part of the team in planning and carrying out the self-study and assessing how well the program meets the TESOL standards. It should also include a clear plan for incorporating continued self-

analysis throughout the life of the program. (The Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University, for example, submits an annual review of that year's goals to TESOL as part of its ongoing plan for self-study.)

Programs considering undertaking a self-study or those that are reaching the end of their self-study process may contact TESOL Central Office for samples of reports from successful self-studies. These sample reports can provide examples of formats that include what TESOL reviewers look for: evidence that administration and faculty were involved in the process; a list of program strengths and concerns; recommendations for change and improvement; strategies for implementation and a timeline. The implementation schedule is often in the form of a grid or schedule that lists all the concerns and recommendations, gives the target completion date, and indicates the names of the persons responsible for the completion.

Documentation to support the report is usually placed in an appendix or an exhibits section. These documents may include budgets, curricula, organizational charts, letters, faculty and staff credentials, and the like. Some reports have a separate section in the appendix to support each area. Exhibits often include program information such as brochures, student orientation packets, registration forms, and housing information. (One possible design is the self-study report by the English Programs for Internationals of the University of South Carolina featured in Appendix A.)

If the report does not include the necessary elements or the reviewers have other concerns, the program will not be granted recognition by TESOL at that time. Reports that have not received recognition in the past have merely described a program or simply answered the self-study questions with no analysis of the program's strengths and weaknesses and no clear plan for improvement and continued self-analysis. In these cases, the program receives a summary of the reviewers' comments and concerns with suggestions for more in-depth self-study. In some cases, reviewers may make suggestions for additions to the report or request a complete reorganization of the report. Once changes have been made, the report may be resubmitted for additional review. If the report includes the recommended segments, the reviewers will most likely recommend that the program receive a

letter and certificate of recognition from TESOL. At that point, the Director of Field Services writes a letter summarizing the comments of the various reviewers and sends this, along with a certificate, to the director of the program. The program is then listed with the other programs that have been officially recognized and received certificates from TESOL. While an acknowledgment of the successful completion of the self-study by TESOL can provide the language or professional preparation program with recognition in the professional community and serve as a model for similar programs interested in conducting a programmatic self-study, it does not entail endorsement of the particular program by TESOL.

Using Outside Consultants

A program undergoing self-study may decide to use an outside consultant at some point. Consultants can be called in during the preliminary stages to help a program get started, and they may continue to consult with the team throughout the self-study process. Some programs have preferred to use consultants only after they have completed the study and prepared the report. Outside consultants can confirm what the self-study team may have found in its own evaluation. Because of their expertise as program evaluators, they can pinpoint problems that the team may have overlooked. They can also be invaluable in looking at the broader picture — the program in relation to the institution as a whole. As outside observers, they may be better able to evaluate objectively the relationship between the English language program and the other administrative and education sectors in the institution.

In higher education, students in English language programs usually prepare to enter varied academic programs in a university, so it is consequential that the language program be evaluated in the broader context of the university. Consultants can help by looking at the campus as a whole and examining the international student exchange environment. This will include the services specific to international students and the various offices and departments affected by international student enrollment. Consultants may appropriately review the working relationship between the language program and the campus offices serving international

students, whereas such a review may be difficult for the language program to undertake on its own. A report from an outside consultant can be instrumental in helping the English language program encourage the institution to recognize the interrelatedness of its international services.

Currently TESOL has no formalized consultant service. However, Central Office will provide the names of highly qualified TESOL professionals who are experienced program evaluators. Most will have undertaken a self-study at their own institutions or have served on a state or regional accrediting team. In the spring of 1993, a subcommittee of the CPS began to develop plans for a TESOL consultant service (with consultants trained by TESOL), which was part of the intent when the TESOL self-study program was first developed. Until that service is in place, TESOL will continue to recommend consultants from a cadre of experienced members and assist programs in this phase of self-study.

Evaluating Programs Outside the U.S.

Programs undertaking a TESOL self-study are asked to endorse the TESOL *Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs* as a preliminary step in the process. These standards were originally written for U.S.-based programs in adult, elementary and secondary, and postsecondary settings. Practitioners in an international context have found the materials somewhat less appropriate for use outside the U.S. Due to these concerns, CPS was charged with the task of revising the *Core Standards* for the international context. In 1990 and 1991, the Committee sought input from TESOL professionals throughout the world and drafted a new document, *Core Standards for English as a Foreign Language/English as an International Language Programs* (1991). These core standards are generic in order to be useful worldwide and primarily for private language programs. They have been translated into Spanish and are available from TESOL Central Office.

Once these new standards became available, the CPS considered whether the TESOL self-study materials should also be revised for programs outside the U.S., where it seemed they were not entirely appropriate. A study conducted by TESOL of

purchasers of the self-study materials included responses from programs both inside and outside the U.S. In general, the results showed that programs had not completed or even begun the self-study process due to a variety of factors: the staff may not be willing to take the time to engage in the process; administrative staff may not be supportive; the staff with the required expertise may not be accessible; and no staff funding is available to pursue the extra work beyond their regular duties.

Virginia LoCastro, past CPS chair, conducted a second survey of affiliates outside the U.S. The three responses, all from South America, indicated that self-study would be appropriate but that difficulties would result from the lack of models and information about the self-study process, the lack of professional help and support from other programs and ministries of education, and the considerable expense in terms of teacher and administrator time to carry out the self-evaluation. LoCastro (1993) notes that the TESOL documents may still provide a much needed point of departure for program self-evaluation outside the U.S. She suggests that for programs outside the U.S. an alternative to engaging in a complete self-study is a smaller, more focused one which would be less time consuming and more manageable. She also points out that many TESOL affiliates outside the U.S. have their own professional standards committees and are involved in questions of accreditation of programs and certification of teachers. The affiliates may even have developed their own materials, which might be more appropriate than the current TESOL materials. In fact, professionals in programs outside the U.S. may want to work with their local affiliates to develop appropriate self-study materials.

Getting Support from TESOL

TESOL Central Office staff is available to discuss the preliminary design of the self-study, help the program focus on its goals, and make suggestions to get the process started. Once a plan is in place and the program is in the process of self-study, the staff can provide further feedback and advice. The staff may recommend that the self-study team contact other TESOL professionals who have conducted a self-study at their institutions

and will suggest appropriate consultants. The self-study team may also submit a preliminary report at an earlier stage. Central Office will review the report for evidence that the program is following the guidelines for a TESOL self-study and either confirm the process or offer suggestions for change. If a program is considering undertaking a self-study, TESOL should be contacted for support and professional guidance.

APPENDIX A

English Programs for Internationals of the University of South Carolina
Self-study Final Report Design

I. Preface: Summary of Findings

II. Self-study Findings
- A. Purposes and Goals
  - Self-study Questions and Responses
  - Strengths
  - Concerns and Recommendations
  - Additional Recommendations
- B. Program Structure
  - 1. Administration
    - Self-study Questions and Responses
    - Strengths
    - Concerns and Recommendations
    - Additional Recommendations
  - 2. Instructional Staff
    - Self-study Questions and Responses
    - Strengths
    - Concerns and Recommendations
    - Additional Recommendations
  - 3. Support Services
    - Self-study Questions and Responses
    - Strengths
    - Concerns and Recommendations
    - Additional Recommendations
- C. Curriculum: Core Course Overview
  - 1. Core Courses
    - a. Overview
    - b. Grammar/Writing
    - c. Reading/Vocabulary
    - d. Communications Seminar Self-study Questions and Responses (for each course)
    - e. Strengths (for each course)
    - f. Concerns with Recommendations (for each course)
    - g. Additional Recommendations (for each course)
  - 2. Computer Laboratory
    - Self-study Questions and Responses
    - Strengths

Concerns and Recommendations
Additional Recommendations

3. Listening Classes
Self-study Questions and Responses
Strengths
Concerns and Recommendations
Additional Recommendations

4. Other (English for Foreign Speakers Courses, International Teaching Assistant Workshop, Test Preparation Courses, Special Projects)
Self-study Questions and Responses
Strengths
Concerns and Recommendations
Additional Recommendations

In Section II C of the report, self-study questions about curriculum are applied to each course, followed by a list of strengths, concerns and recommendations.

D. Program Implementation
Self-study Questions and Responses
Strengths
Concerns with Recommendations
Additional Recommendations

E. Program Assessment
Self-study Questions and Responses
Strengths
Concerns with Recommendations
Additional Recommendations

III. Implementation Plan and Master Implementation Schedule

The implementation schedule lists all concerns and recommendations from Section II with priorities (high, medium, low) indicated. An implementation grid gives the target completion date, a place to note the actual completion date, and the names of the persons responsible.

IV. Appendices

V. Exhibits

Documentation to support the report is placed in the Appendix or Exhibits section. These documents may be budgets, curricula, organizational charts, letters, faculty and staff credentials, and the like. Some reports have a separate section in the Appendix to support each section of the report. Exhibits

may include program information such as brochures, student orientation packets, registration forms, and housing information.

PART TWO:

TESOL SELF-STUDY PROGRAM REPORTS

3 Taking on the Challenges of Self-study

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For a couple of years, the faculty and staff of the English Programs for Internationals (EPI) of the University of South Carolina had been considering the idea of conducting a TESOL self-study. They viewed it as they viewed exercise — something that they knew they needed to do, something that would be good for them, but not particularly something that they were looking forward to doing. So they procrastinated.

During the previous 12 years, EPI had grown into a stable, successful, and financially self-reliant intensive English program. Several of the faculty had molded their careers around the program. In 1991-1992, English Programs for Internationals had 701 enrollments in all courses and special projects, employing 35 faculty and staff. EPI offered more than 30 different courses, some of them in cooperation with other university units. The program brought in more than $350,000 in federal grant funds. However, in 1991, EPI's once comfortable and cordial context at the university became uncomfortable and less than cordial.

On three separate occasions, the university president, who was new to the job, asked the director about the accreditation and overall quality of the program. Expenditures and personnel requests that had once been routinely approved were closely scrutinized and frequently denied. It became increasingly difficult to keep class sizes small enough for effective language teaching and learning and to continue to provide the level of services the students needed. Although everyone worked harder and longer to maintain the quality of the program, it became clear that the program's ability to operate was in jeopardy. Program personnel had to move to help themselves. No support mechanism was available within the program's institutional context because the faculty was untenurable, funded by soft money. Program personnel turned to the TESOL Self-study for help in validating their worth and in showing in great detail to themselves and to whomever wished to know what they were about and, indeed, who they were.

Phases of the Process

After carefully reviewing the TESOL Self-study packet and discussing the challenges of the project, the director and two associate directors decided that if the project were to benefit the program and be effective, it would have to be orchestrated from within — bottom up rather than top down. The program administrators asked a faculty member whom all appreciated for her pedagogical and professional excellence to consider serving as self-study coordinator and to be the organizer and the decision maker during the process with the full support of the program. She agreed, and for three terms (9 months) she was given a 40 % percent reduction in teaching to coordinate the self-study, a sizable financial investment but absolutely essential to ensure the successful completion of the project. The project coordinator divided the project into five phases.

Phase 1, Project Preparation, involved establishing the EPI Self-study Steering Committee, composed of the self-study coordinator, the director, and the two associate directors; developing the project plan; defining goals for the self-study; identifying procedures to be followed; and contacting necessary parties concerning the undertaking of the project.

Phase 2, Project Design, involved introducing the project to the faculty and staff and creating workgroups. To do this, the Steering Committee first held a self-study kick-off meeting during which they addressed questions that the faculty and staff might have concerning the self-study and presented a project timeline to show the scope and schedule of the project. The Steering Committee asked each person to help start the self-study process by jotting down what each viewed as the program's strengths and weaknesses.

Then workgroups were created. Similar to the TESOL Self-study process used by the Intensive English Language Institute at Utah State University (Carkin, 1991), every member of the program team, from the director to the graduate assistants, served on at least one of the six workgroups. The Administration, Instructional Staff, Support Services and Curriculum Workgroups addressed specific sets of self-study questions listed in TESOL's 1986 *Standards and Self-Study Questions for Postsecondary*

Programs. The Student Input Workgroup was created to collect information from students regarding the particular areas being reviewed by the other workgroups. The Logistics and Computer Support group helped input data and format documents. Except for the latter workgroup, which comprised the program's computer coordinator and his assistant, workgroups consisted of five to seven members. Faculty and staff were asked with which areas of review they wanted to help and on which workgroups they were interested in serving. Taking these requests into consideration, the Self-study Steering Committee guided their formation and selected the leaders for each group.

At a second meeting, the newly formed workgroups were informed of the guidelines to follow as they performed their work (see Appendix A). These included, for example, how work was to be assigned and what format was to be used. With an understanding of the scope of the project and the general procedures to be followed, the self-study team was ready to undertake the project in an organized and confident fashion.

Phase 3, Data Collection and Analysis, involved two tasks. First, workgroups addressed the TESOL self-study questions by doing research, answering the questions and then identifying program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations resulting from the review. Second, they presented these findings to the faculty and staff for review and approval.

In this phase, the Student Input Workgroup worked somewhat differently. Their activities consisted primarily of developing and administering an all-encompassing "Student Input Survey" for currently enrolled and recently matriculated students, personally interviewing several former students, and distributing these results to the other workgroups for their analysis. While the Student Input Workgroup's activities were different from those of other workgroups, the tasks were in no way less demanding.

Phase 4, Defining Implementation Plans, involved prioritizing the many recommendations identified in Phase 3 of the project and identifying implementation dates and persons responsible for the various activities. This information was compiled into the Implementation Schedule.

Phase 5, Reporting Self-Study Results, required the compilation, printing, and distribution of the self-study document

itself with its findings, implementation plan, and appendices. In addition, an exhibits manual was compiled containing items that were considered too bulky and not particularly crucial to include in the self-study document itself. A project documentation manual was created for use in future self-study efforts.

Reaching Consensus

Program personnel, all of whom were involved in the self-study process, met, argued, gathered data, wrote, argued again, revised, and finally edited. Everyone worked at least two to five additional hours per week from September to January, completing the tasks they had assigned themselves. The various parts of the self-study were placed on the program's fileserver so that all could input contributions when they found time, often in the evenings and on weekends. A first draft of some 100 pages was produced by February, and this draft was shared with all those within the university who were, at that time, analyzing every nuance of the program.

Everyone continued to work and to produce, for there was still much more to do — gather documentation, analyze additional data, prioritize recommendations, set an implementation schedule, and format the document. All worked beyond normal limits, and performance levels suffered. The pace they had set for themselves was exhausting. They complained; they vented to and at each other. Colleagues of 6, 10, 12 years saw new sides of each other. Being friends as well as colleagues, however, they were able to smile.

All sides of the program became visible. Yes, there were weaknesses: The program was at odds with its administrative unit; faculty salaries were 10-20 % percent below the regional average; the written curriculum had not been updated to reflect current classroom practices; and ongoing program-related research needed to be incorporated into the annual strategic plan and budget. These were the general findings, but there were many more specific findings. More importantly, strengths were recognized and documented: team orientation; creative problem-solving; cooperative and efficient service to other university units; professional grounding in teaching language; comprehensive,

research-based, innovative curriculum; adequate equipment to provide high quality language study; and strong commitment to a student-oriented program. Of course, these only summarize the overall strengths, but many more were articulated.

Most importantly, the program gained added strength as a unit, and personnel worked as a very well-trained, experienced team. When everyone began to see the product after working so hard through the process, professional positivism on a programmatic as well as an individual level supplanted the negativism engendered by external stress and internal burnout. Not only had the program survived the time and labor demands of conducting a TESOL self-study, it had also survived the most demanding era in its existence as a university unit because of the self-study process. EPI's experience with the TESOL self-study confirms Byrd and Constantinides (1991), who maintain that the self-study process should be "as important as (if not more important than) the product" (p. 21).

Meeting Challenges

Conducting the self-study proved to have its own challenges and pitfalls, many of which were unanticipated. One of the difficulties encountered related to the terminology used in the TESOL self-study materials. TESOL's (1989) *Manual of Self-study for TESOL and TESOL Professional Preparation Programs* (1989) recommends that a program's Self-study Report include "a discussion of the strengths of the program and the *areas to be improved*" (p. 12; italics added). In an effort to be as thorough as possible, program personnel attempted to document every possible strength and shortcoming, major and minor, in the program. As the "areas to be improved" were documented, faculty who had been responsible for "weak" components of the program felt that their work and professional standards were being called into question. Some faculty, quite undeservedly so, began to feel inadequate.

Additional concern was expressed that as less-than-friendly observers outside the program reviewed the self-study, they might use the numerous weaknesses enumerated in the document as justification for meddling in the program's functions. Words were

demonstrating their power in this situation. Rather than allow the use of a word to foster discouragement, the term *weakness* was replaced with *concern* in the subsequent drafts and in the final self-study document.

Another difficulty which was more pervasive was the orientation of the self-study questions found in TESOL's *Standards and Self-Study Questions for Postsecondary Programs*. Designed for both intensive and nonintensive ESL programs, some self-study questions were found to be unclear or inappropriate given the organizational characteristics of the program under study. Some workgroups spent great effort to render an interpretation of the questions before embarking on the analysis necessary to answer the questions. As a case in point, the committee considering the self-study questions related to instructional staff had some difficulty interpreting the question: How do members of the instructional staff give evidence of dedication to providing a high quality of instruction taking into account a variety of needs and learning styles? The committee wrangled over whether the question's focus was on "how evidence is given" or if the focus was on "dedication to providing a high quality of instruction." Interpretation of TESOL questions led to varying degrees of frustration as each workgroup worked through its questions. TESOL's guidelines point to the fact that the self-study questions are meant to be points of departure for program analysis. Still, it is difficult for professionals who are unfamiliar with the self-study process to take the questions as less than holy writ. At the same time, the process of interpreting questions shed light on issues specific to the program's context; therefore, grappling with the meanings of questions had some benefits.

Another difficulty encountered was the relative inaccessibility of individuals who could give advice regarding TESOL's Self-study materials. TESOL does not have a staff solely devoted to assisting programs conducting self-studies. (As the organization grows and the process of self-study becomes more routine among the TESOL membership, it would be desirable for TESOL to have more advisors available to assist programs engaging in self-study.) Another aspect of this particular difficulty is the relatively small number of IEPs that have completed a self-study. Few programs can offer advice from the vantage of

their own experience. Again, as more programs take on the challenge of a TESOL Self-study, more resources will become available to guide and assist programs that initiate the project.

Many difficulties which the program encountered were not at all related to TESOL. The democratic, egalitarian process that the program had designed to carry out the project required significant participation of all faculty and staff, in addition to their regular duties. Though the self-study coordinator and program administration expected a degree of burnout in the process, no one had anticipated how early burnout would develop. With the project beginning in September, some program personnel expressed frustration as early as November. Much of the frustration was due to deadlines which had been set by the project coordinator at the urging of the program administration as a result of the current university climate to have a completed set of self-study findings within 2 1/2 months.

The experience of this self-study indicates that there should be a delicate balance between pushing the process toward a target completion date and providing adequate time for all involved to conduct self-study work as well as handling their regular duties. Extending deadlines may reduce stress related to workloads, but it may induce stress in that the project is always hanging over the organization's corporate head. It is important to keep staff on task with regular reminders that an end is in sight.

Surviving the Process

Given that the process of self-study resulted in some unusual challenges for the program, it is important to note a number of factors which made the task manageable and which sustained the organization through the process. The most important factor was the selection of a self-study coordinator who functioned essentially as a project manager. Program administrative staff, who would have taken on the responsibility under ordinary circumstances, recognized that the intracampus administrative difficulties in which the program found itself required increasing amounts of administrative effort, especially on the part of the program director. Interdepartmental rivalries and their accompanying mistrust and misunderstanding characterized the

immediate organizational environment. The instability of the program's organizational surroundings along with the arrival of a new university president required that the program director invest enormous effort in program advocacy. The director had to focus much energy to ensure that various campus committees and officers possessed accurate and adequate knowledge of the program's mission and its procedures.

Recognizing the director's priorities and the concomitant additions to the workload of other administrative staff, the decision was made to have a faculty member coordinate the program's self-study efforts. This decision was to have far-reaching effects beyond the administrative staff's expectations. It should be noted that some organizations would choose to delay the undertaking of a self-study until some improvement occurred in the organizational environment. Although the self-study was conducted in less than ideal organizational conditions, the environmental stresses stimulated a thorough and well-grounded analysis.

One of the expectations of using a faculty member to coordinate the project, as opposed to using a member of the administrative staff, was that the self-study would greatly benefit from using a bottom-up management orientation. With a member of the instructional staff orchestrating the activities of working committees composed of faculty, staff, and administration, the added responsibilities placed on all program staff became egalitarian in nature. By placing this responsibility with a member of the faculty, the administrative staff deflected potential criticism regarding increased workloads brought about by the self-study activities, and, at the same time, instilled a sense of collegiality in the process. The member of the faculty selected for this task had had 3 years of experience teaching in the program. Though many faculty had far more experience than she, her relative lack of knowledge of corporate history meant that she was likely to probe into issues that more experienced staff might have taken as givens. It was advantageous that this faculty member had a reputation for diligence and consistency among program staff. She possessed excellent organizational skills which contributed to the program sustaining its commitment toward completing the task.

In addition to designating this faculty member as the coordinator of the self-study project, the administrative staff

recognized the complexity and the difficulty of the task involved and so chose to reduce the coordinator's teaching load so that she could devote maximum attention to the project. The administrative staff recognized that the project needed to be monitored significantly; an instructor preoccupied with teaching duties would not be able to devote adequate energy to the task. (It may well be that the relatively small number of IEPs that have completed the TESOL Self-study is due to the tendency for self-study coordinators to take on the task in addition to routine duties.) In this case, the self-study coordinator devoted more than 350 hours to the self-study over the course of 9 months. It would be the unusually dedicated instructor or administrator who would give this much time to the task on top of regular responsibilities. Reducing the coordinator's standard workload was an indication of the program's commitment.

Working as a Team

The heavy workload of the project coordinator did not result in the self-study endeavor being the product of a single individual. Rather, the project required important contributions of time, effort, and expertise on the part of program administration, faculty, and staff — even a student intern became involved. The self-study significantly "enhanced faculty collaboration" (Numrich & Sartori, 1990, p. 9), a result of the self-study process also reported by the American Language Program of Columbia University. To facilitate the process, the self-study coordinator monitored workgroups and provided troubleshooting for the analysis of questions. She also served as a member of the curriculum workgroup, which enabled her to be part of the process while at the same time overseeing the project. She was a participant-observer in the self-study process, and this role enhanced her ability to coordinate.

The tasks of assessing the program's strengths and weaknesses and recommending plans for improvement belonged exclusively to the workgroups. The groups met on a regular basis (at least twice monthly for a 4-month period) with the purpose of dealing with the self-study questions, planning necessary research to gather information for answering the questions, and writing and

editing responses to the questions. The workgroup leader's primary responsibility was to keep the workgroup moving toward completion of the responses to the self-study questions. Regardless of whether faculty or staff were involved, each group designed its own strategy for completing the task. Thus, each workgroup performed its duties autonomously, and each workgroup saw its portion of the self-study as its own product. In this way there was an avoidance of any feeling that workgroups were performing jobs at the bidding of program administration or the self-study coordinator. According to Fox and Wintergerst (1989), "faculty need to be involved so the project becomes their own" (p. 11). This occurred and as workgroups assumed ownership of their portions of the self-study, they took professional pride in the document that they were producing.

This broad-based ownership of the self-study document was enhanced by the use of personal computers connected by a local network. As draft responses to various self-study questions were completed, the documents were immediately accessible to all members of the workgroup (and even to faculty and staff who were not part of the workgroup). This accessibility of all materials facilitated the editing process and allowed for a great deal of peer review and editing which would have been far more difficult if computers had not been available. As members of each workgroup made their contributions to the self-study, the faculty and staff began to see their personal stake not only in the task of completing the self-study but also in the long-term development of the program itself. What EPI learned during the self-study confirmed Evans' (1993/1994) conclusions concerning the experience: "the self-study was a formidable undertaking, to be sure, but the dividends have been astonishingly positive and the effects far-reaching" (p. 23).

Worth of the Process

The self-study process channeled collective energy into positive directions and provided an experience in collaborative professional development. Beyond working as a team in uncovering and documenting strengths and concerns and in becoming the program's strongest advocates, program personnel

expanded computer competence, learned more about quantitative and qualitative research methods, and established the program's worth within the institution and their own professionalism within the field.

Because the program's networked computer system was integral to the completion of the self-study tasks, everyone became familiar with the software being used and learned how to work with the fileserver. Just as a content-based syllabus moves second language learners to improve their English proficiency as the content they want to study is addressed, all program personnel upgraded their computer proficiency because they were intent on completing their self-study assignments.

The participants also improved their research skills. To answer the self-study questions comprehensively and accurately, everyone had to gather great quantities of data. One faculty member collected program documents dating from 1979, when the program was established. She also talked with other university personnel involved in similar nonmainstream operations, trying to discover their administrative and fiscal procedures in order to set a precedent for those of the program. Several surveys were developed, distributed, completed, collated, and analyzed to gather the necessary information on support services, activities, and students' overall perception of the program. Moreover, the faculty had to update vitae so that they could be analyzed to answer some of the self-study questions.

Faculty scrutinized curricula minutely, especially the curriculum of the intensive program. In previous years, faculty had reviewed and revised the intensive curriculum, but in pieces. They had never looked at the program as an integrated whole nor had they worked together to make long-range program plans for step-by-step improvements. Now there is a well articulated strategic plan because program personnel decided to develop a 5-year implementation schedule for the more than 300 recommendations made. They wanted to ensure that all the work which they had done would work *for* them. They reshuffled the workgroups and met simultaneously to prioritize the many recommendations as high, medium, or low. They also set times (years) when these recommendations might be addressed. The self-study coordinator served as organizer, facilitator, and coach

during these sessions. The self-study 5-year implementation schedule has provided a common, program-wide foundation for decision making, and this has become the heart of the program's strategic planning.

Through the TESOL self-study process, program personnel articulated concerns about the program and documented the strengths. They used both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the discovery process. They validated the program's uniqueness within its institution so that when one is asked, "Why doesn't EPI . . . ?," one can respond with confidence, "because, as the self-study describes on page 26, ..." Indeed, until there is an accreditation agency and mechanism for IEPs in the U.S., completing a self-study guided by a recognized professional organization is all that English programs can do to validate their quality as academic entities. The tenuous positions of IEPs as financially self-supporting units, either inside or outside a U.S. institution of higher education, compels accountability. The self-study process provides an invaluable means to establish accountability in the absence of formal accreditation.

The English Programs for Internationals at the University of South Carolina was faced with a situation in which its accountability was being questioned and its existence was being threatened. Instead of diffusing spirit by passively complaining about operational difficulties, the program collected its spirit and channeled it toward a pro-active, positive programmatic end — the completion of a TESOL self-study. As a result, program personnel strengthened its team and, in so doing, strengthened the program and themselves as ESL professionals. Within their university context, they became their strongest advocates. They produced sound data, analysis, and documentation, laying it open for scrutiny by themselves, their university, and their ESL colleagues. EPI became a better program, one deserving of professional recognition, because personnel worked as a team in discovering how they could improve the program and in validating its worth. Instead of enervating the program because of the work imposed, the self-study once completed energized the program, increasing its capacity and its professionalism. EPI's experience with the TESOL self-study confirmed each of Kreidler's (1987) 10 reasons for conducting such a study, especially the tenth: "results of the

self-study processes help to improve organizational or programmatic health" (p. 13).

Appendix A

EPI Self-study Workgroup Procedures

Introduction: In general, you will meet periodically with your workgroup to *discuss given self-study questions* and *address additional issues/concerns* that are identified during self-study activities. Additionally, you will identify *strengths and weaknesses* of the area being reviewed and *identify recommendations* for improvements. As much work as possible should be done outside of workgroup meetings.

Aim to have this work done and presented to the steering committee by December 10, 1991. Subsequently, sometime during the winter and spring terms, your results will be presented to all the faculty and staff and an implementation schedule for making the improvements over time will be compiled.

Procedures for each workgroup and its participants:

1. Prior to the first workgroup meeting each individual should:

   a. Review the study questions assigned to your workgroup, identifying those questions for which you may want to volunteer to be responsible.
   b. Review the TESOL standards* (in the self-study manual) associated with the questions.
   c. Review an example* of another program's responses to such questions.

2. Together as a workgroup, address each self-study question by doing the following:

   a. Assign the question to an individual(s) in the workgroup, asking for volunteers.
   b. Discuss it as a group to get various ideas and opinions. The individual(s) responsible for it should take notes. Specifically discuss the following:
      - the TESOL standard(s) associated with the question (from the self-study manual*)
      - the answer to the question
      - any data which must be collected to answer the question**
      - the strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the subject under question
      - recommendations for improvement

3. Individuals should formally document each question (using the Self-study Project Software) by doing the following (typing one's initials after each of these, also***):

   a. Answer the question (in paragraph format), placing your initials after your response.
   b. List any strengths.
   c. List any weaknesses.
   d. Make recommendations for improvements (as related to the weaknesses).
   e. Identify/submit associated appendices (e.g., a written policy, a list of field trips).

4. As a workgroup, identify and document *any other* strengths or weaknesses/issues/concerns which surface as you work together as a group or gather them from (1) discussions with other faculty and staff, (2) student input surveys, and/or (3) the project coordinator.

   a. *If ideas are directly related to your workgroup's area of study*, assign them to someone who should then document them by identifying each as a strength or weakness, and making any necessary recommendation (and initializing these strengths/weaknesses and recommendations ***).
   b. Otherwise, *if the ideas are not related to your area*, have someone document the items and submit them to the self-study project coordinator.

* Will be distributed by your workgroup leader or self-study coordinator.

** If you discover during your work that certain data are not available within EPI, document this as a weakness and make a recommendation for improvement.

*** Initials will be used for tracking purposes during the self-study, but eventually removed.

4 Program Ownership Through Self-study Involvement

Norman Evans, Brigham Young University-Hawaii

International students have always been part of Brigham Young University-Hawaii's educational mission. Students from Pacific islands and Asian Rim countries have been studying on the Laie campus since it opened nearly 40 years ago. However, not until the mid-1960s had the number of international students increased to the point that a language support program was needed for the burgeoning ESL population on campus. Nearly 30 different nationalities were represented at the school at any given time, and the student range of English abilities was almost as diverse as their countries of origin. In 1963, the English Language Institute (ELI) was established to help in this linguistically diverse situation. At that time, the Institute's first offerings consisted of three sections of writing on two levels for international students.

The primary function of the Institute, as it now stands, is to prepare its nearly 300 ESL students for the linguistic demands that university life will place on them. Depending on the number of students admitted to the university, the Institute serves anywhere from 200 to 400 students each semester. Approximately 45 percent of the 2,000 students who attend the university speak English as a second language, and almost all of them have been in ESL classes at one time or another. Students in the Institute now come from as many as forty different countries around the world. The primary recruiting areas for the University, however, are the Pacific Basin and Asian Rim countries. All ESL students are fully matriculated in the university, and they receive a token amount of university credit for their ELI class work. In addition, they can use their study of English to meet the general education language requirement. Similar to that of other ESL programs, the language study ELI students complete has typically not been considered academic.

In similar fashion, the ELI staff has not always been given the academic recognition on campus that other disciplines

receive—once again, a situation common in the ESL profession. Since its inception, the Institute has been part of a large, diverse department, the Division of Language, Literature and Communication. The Division also houses Communications, Literature, TESOL, Linguistics, Foreign Languages, and the ELI. Even though the ELI is part of this Division, relatively little is known about the Institute by others, both outside and sometimes within the division. From the first three sections of writing classes offered 30 years ago, the Institute has grown from relative obscurity into 16 different classes on four different levels, and offers approximately 45 sections of English language classes each semester.

Launching a Self-study

As situations changed on campus over the years, the Institute developed and adapted to meet the needs and demands that the students and university placed on it. Since program maintenance required so much of the understaffed institute's time, program planning, and evaluation were practically impossible. Not since the program began in 1963 had the ELI been thoroughly and systematically evaluated. The nearest to a self-study that the Institute has come was its participation in the university accreditation procedures. These evaluations tended to be rather cursory and formulaic in nature. Seldom did the ELI get more attention than a few pages of questions to answer and a paragraph or two in the final institutional report. In 1991, the Vice President for Academics approached the Institute Director about the possibility of conducting a program self-study. In retrospect, that question proved to be a significant factor to the self-study's success. Byrd and Constantinides (1991) note that "the higher in the organization the commitment resides, the more likely it is that any suggested changes resulting from the self-study will be implemented" (p. 22). From the beginning, the ELI had key administrative support. Since it was the vice president who suggested the self-study, it was much easier to ask for institutional assistance when needs arose. With administrative support and encouragement, the program was ready to take a long, hard look at what it was doing and why.

Planning a Self-study

While planning a self-study, it is important to keep in mind that each program is different and has its own needs and purposes. Any program undertaking a self-study should understand that flexibility and adaptation are necessary. No one formula exists that will work for all programs. Setting a plan that contains structure, purpose, and direction suitable to the program evaluated are essential elements to a successful self-study. The ELI's preliminary planning dealt with many complex questions and issues of which none was more important than choosing a design for the study and getting people involved. The team of teachers responsible for launching the study realized early in the planning stages that the self-study was going to be a long, arduous process and that the need for structure and guidance were key to the project's success. Everyone involved agreed that if the time and resources necessary to conduct a self-study were going to be committed, the self-study needed to be done well. The planning committee decided that TESOL's *Core Standards* and its self-study guidelines provided the professionalism, structure, and flexibility needed. Most importantly, when TESOL developed its self-study guidelines, it did so in such a manner that a substantial spirit of ownership could develop within a program during the process. The ELI wanted program ownership to be one of the results of its self-study.

The decision to follow TESOL's self-study guidelines proved to be a wise one. TESOL's materials were developed by ESL professionals who know the challenges and needs of ESOL programs. In addition, the guidelines were general enough to provide direction without dictating details. The ELI found the guidelines mostly applicable, and when they were not, the necessary modifications to meet the Institute's specific requirements were made. Furthermore, the level of credence and importance placed on the ELI's program evaluation by others outside the profession was significantly enhanced by the fact that the study was sanctioned by an international organization the size and scope of TESOL.

Determining Involvement

The question of who should be involved was one of the most critical in the study. In fact, it set the trademark of openness that the study has had throughout. Most self-study materials suggest that a major ingredient to a successful program evaluation is the involvement of as many people associated with the program as possible (Cochran & Hengstler, 1984; Conner & Hendricks, 1989; Kells, 1983; Pennington, 1991). Byrd and Constantinides (1991) note:

> In the case of a self-study conducted by an ESL program, not only the ESL program staff but also members of the larger academic organizational community should have roles in the self-study. Besides increasing the number of participants and the sense of ownership for the self-study process, widespread participation can also increase the visibility of the ESL program within the institution. (p. 23)

Many facets of the ELI's self-study could be discussed. However, few had more impact on the success of the study than the level of involvement that was achieved. Nearly 200 faculty, students, staff and other university employees contributed to the Institute's program evaluation. While the following examples may be specific only to the ELI, they show what is possible when the involvement in a self-study extends beyond the personnel in the program. Extensive involvement is a principle that should be part of any program's self-study.

An Open Meeting Model

The ELI determined that the best way to get people in the larger academic community involved was to invite everyone on campus to participate. This was done through an open meeting format consisting of a series of 14 weekly meetings open to all interested persons. This schedule of meetings proved to be rigorous yet rewarding.

General invitations to the open meetings were extended to

everyone on campus through announcements in the school newspaper and campus bulletin. Faculty and staff within the department were invited through departmental memoranda. Personal invitations to key people were extended by telephone or office visits as the topics of discussion demanded. For instance, the Director of Admissions was invited to the meetings when admissions and recruiting questions were discussed. Counselors, housing officers, health center nurses and personnel were invited to the meetings dealing with student services. Meeting announcements always included an agenda of the topics to be discussed so that the participants would be informed and prepared for the discussions.

The agendas for these meetings evolved from the TESOL *Core Standards* and the accompanying questions. The questions were sorted and divided into segments that could be covered in 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours. The questions involving curriculum, for example, were far too complex to be adequately dealt with in one meeting. They were, therefore, spread out over 2 and 1/2 weeks. When the TESOL guidelines did not match aspects unique to the ELI, the Institute developed its own questions. For example, an integral part of the ELI in Hawaii are the two satellite programs established in Western Samoa and Tonga. Since a thorough evaluation of these in-country ELIs was needed and the TESOL materials did not cover such programs, the Institute developed its own questions and guidelines.

The open meeting format was time-consuming. It took nearly 5 months to complete all 14 meetings. Each meeting was attended by a core of Institute teachers who had been involved in the process from the beginning and other individuals who were attending for the first or second time. Having participants with such a diversity of knowledge about the ELI, ESL, and the self-study process created some unavoidable challenges. For instance, at the beginning of each meeting a fair amount of time had to be spent to present background and general information about the Institute and the self-study process. Also, it was easy for the discussions to get sidetracked from the meeting's original purpose. However, had participation in these meetings been restricted to those directly involved with the ELI, much more could have been covered in less time, but much in the process would have been

sacrificed.

What was lost in time orienting newcomers to ESL was gained in increased program visibility and understanding of the Institute by others on campus. Much more than information from a variety of outside sources was obtained in these meetings. The flow of information occurred both ways. Each teacher or staff member attending not only had the opportunity to share ideas but was also being better informed about the Institute. By the end of the fourteenth meeting, nearly 200 faculty, staff, and students had shared ideas and had been educated about the ELI. As a result, the participants within and outside the Institute were now more knowledgeable.

Unfortunately, the open meeting format did not provide an appropriate forum for the students. Their busy schedules and general lack of interest in such administrative matters as a self-study kept them away. Since the students' voice was considered vital to the study, two special open meetings were held to encourage their participation. The first meeting addressed the grading and progress warning system used in the Institute — two extremely important issues for students. To reach as many students as possible, personal invitations were sent to all current and former Institute students. Attendance was also increased by scheduling the meeting during the one hour of the week when no classes were held. To allow students the freedom to speak openly, honestly, and anonymously, teachers were not invited. The students' academic advisor, a person with whom most students are very comfortable and open, conducted the meeting and took notes. Valuable insights were gained and the students realized that their opinions counted. Subsequently, a second student meeting was held with equally rewarding results.

A major reason for the open meeting format was to get people on campus involved and to keep them informed. In an attempt to reach those who were not attending the meetings, a fairly rigorous publicity campaign was undertaken by way of the campus bulletin, school newspaper, and progress reports. Articles about the Institute and the self-study process appeared in the school newspaper bimonthly, and weekly announcements of the open meetings were placed in the campus bulletin. In addition, three progress reports were sent to the Vice President for Academics

throughout the 14-week period. These reports were usually brief summaries of the progress that was made and the ideas discussed. The time taken to prepare this publicity was time well spent. After 14 weeks of meetings, the level of program awareness was increasing across the campus. Ownership of the program and the self-study was expanding beyond the Institute staff. Faculty in other disciplines, staff, and administrators across the campus were contributing to the self-study and the Institute. This spirit of openness which began during the first 5 months of the self-study carried through to the remaining phases of the study.

ELI Retreat

The first key meeting that followed the open meetings was a full-day retreat for all the ELI personnel. All instructors, staff, full-time and part-time, directly involved in the ELI were invited. The Division Chair and Academic Vice President were also invited. Once again, it was not a small, exclusive committee meeting but a broad representation of the ELI. The primary purpose of the retreat was to bring closure to the data-gathering phase of the study and to set goals and directions for the next phase. Much of what was discussed in this retreat came directly from notes taken during the open meetings. A secondary purpose for this retreat was to get input from the entire ELI staff, who had not been given adequate time to express their ideas fully on many critical issues during the open meetings. This full-day retreat provided the opportunity to focus on important topics that required more thought than the open meeting format allowed.

The retreat also proved to be extremely helpful in building program unity and support for the self-study. After 5 months of gathering data, the Institute needed a chance to bring the study back into focus. This retreat met that need and generated a renewal of energy and commitment to the project. This regrouping was vital to sustaining the momentum needed to carry the ELI staff through the rigorous months of self-study that remained.

Faculty Retreat

Once the preliminary reports from the open meetings and

the ELI retreat were compiled, the Vice President for Academics requested that another full-day retreat be organized where a representative from each of the academic divisions, the library, the Associate Vice President for Academics, and the Vice President for Academics could respond to the preliminary report and offer further insights and recommendations. This meeting did more to develop a sense of ownership and understanding of the ELI and the ESL students across campus than any of the previous meetings. This ownership is best reflected in a comment made by a professor from the School of Business near the end of the retreat: "I had no idea this program (the ELI) impacted our university so profoundly."

This retreat not only raised faculty awareness of the ELI, but it also generated some very exciting, far-reaching ideas for the Institute. For example, it was at this retreat that the idea of offering ESL students an academic minor in English language studies originated. A communications professor in attendance championed the minor into reality. Having professors from other disciplines provide suggestions suddenly made the ELI everyone's program. This diverse level of understanding and support also proved to be invaluable later as proposals affecting the ELI passed through the necessary university committees. The level and degree of involvement in this faculty retreat made this a meeting of great significance for the future of the Institute.

The School of Education representative at the retreat commented about the self-study report saying, "It is not fair that only a few of us have this opportunity. Every faculty member on campus should read this report." A direct result from this suggestion was that a representative from the ELI presented a self-study update at a general faculty meeting. Several months later, another faculty meeting report was requested. These two presentations at general faculty meetings were the most exposure to the general faculty that the Institute has ever had in more than 15 years. Ownership and understanding of the ELI were being cultivated campuswide.

Consultants

Early in the self-study process, it was decided that

involvement should be both internal and external. In order to meet this objective, two ESL consultants were invited to review the reports and to spend several days on campus gathering further data. Having outside consultants did much to enhance the image of the program on campus. It added a valuable perspective to the self-study. In addition, the consultants helped increase exposure across campus as they visited and interviewed people involved with the ELI in various capacities. The attention and credibility that the outside consultants brought to the self-study findings were worth the time and money spent on their involvement.

Conclusion

In retrospect, the English Language Institute of Brigham Young University-Hawaii could and should have done some things differently. It was not an easy or smooth process, and it was unquestionably a great deal of work. One thing is certain, however. The ELI's commitment to getting a broad base of involvement has resulted in dividends beyond its greatest expectations. The program has amassed a wealth of information and a depth of knowledge far beyond what could have been gained by including only the ELI personnel in the process. There is an institutional sense of ownership in the program which extends beyond the ELI. When involvement in the process is broad, the momentum for the self-study is institutionally and not individually driven. As a result, momentum is less likely to waver when key individuals have a change of assignment. Furthermore, more individuals are now better informed about the ESL students and the ELI. The Institute and its students have received unparalleled attention and respect. Program innovations are given fair hearings by well-informed colleagues outside the ESL profession.

Students are respected for their academic achievements in the study of a foreign language. They now receive full credit for their English language classes. Gone are the days of token credit for English language studies, and great strides have been made in eliminating the stigma that students have about studying English. Misunderstandings that have existed for over thirty years about the

ELI and ESL students are being dispelled. In addition, the ELI faculty has achieved a greater sense of professionalism as a result of what has been accomplished in the self-study and the newly accorded respect that others outside the program extend to them. None of this would have been possible without the broad base of involvement throughout the self-study process. It has been said that the process of self-study is as important as the final product. From the experience it gained, the ELI would whole-heartedly agree and would add that who is involved is as important as what is involved in the self-study process.

5 Anatomy of a Self-study: On-site Consultants

Susan Carkin, Utah State University

When the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) at Utah State University began its self-study in the summer of 1988, the IELI had been in formal existence for 18 years. Like all IEPs which have operated over two decades, the nationalities, numbers, and motivations of students have undergone some changes, but student numbers have usually averaged between 80 and 100 per quarter. The program consists almost entirely of F-1 students who are admitted to the university on the basis of their academic credentials prior to being assigned to the IELI. The program has a strong English for academic purposes (EAP) orientation since its clientele is university bound.

Because the program is credit-bearing (i.e., it offers four undergraduate elective credits for each 5-hour class), it is presumed to operate with the same level of accountability to students and the profession as do other academic departments. Therefore, when the self-study was initiated, the institutional expectation was that the evaluation undertaken by the IEP would resemble that of other university departments, including the use of outside experts who would then serve as on-site reviewers.

When the reviewers arrived in February 1989, the IELI had been an independent program for 4 years. The program had originated in 1970 in the Department of Languages, its academic home until 1985. As a result of some executive decisions based on declining enrollments, the IELI had become an independent program with a director reporting to the Dean of the College of Humanities. The program operated like the other 12 departments in the College of Humanities, with the director representing the program at college meetings with the 12 department heads. However, and not surprisingly, in terms of status, salary, workload, and institutional representation, there were fewer equivalences between the IELI and its sister departments.

Motivation for the TESOL Self-study

In the spring of 1988, the IELI decided to undergo the TESOL self-study process and, as part of that process, followed the institutional protocol for almost all departments: the conducting of a self-study followed by a review team's on-site visit, usually lasting 2 full days. The review team typically consists of two outside reviewers and one on-campus reviewer from the same college.

The institutional context for motivation of the process was most immediate in a college-wide concern for program and departmental excellence. As part of a state system of higher education, departments in the university are mandated by the State Board of Regents to undergo periodic review. The IELI became a credit-bearing program in the Department of Languages in 1982 and had not previously conducted a self-study. The Dean of the College of Humanities asked the IELI to prepare a self-study based on the evaluation criteria from the State Board of Regents — criteria shared by all departments across the university.

After a review of the Board's document, there was concern that the nature of teaching in an IEP and the intensive advising and interaction with students and other teachers that are requisite in such a program would not be adequately described by the Regents' criteria. Intensive programs of any kind, whether language or educational, are a unique type of program in higher education. However, there is another reason why IEPs are neglected by most institutional mission statements and excluded from institutional reviews: Their clientele consists largely of international students and non-citizens who earn degrees and then return to their countries. State institutions, with a few notable exceptions, hardly know how to value such a clientele. Goodwin & Nacht (1983) discuss the failure of U.S. institutions of higher education and by implication state that governing boards are to formulate policy regarding international students. It is not surprising then that the Regents' evaluation criteria should prove unsuitable for an IEP or for internationalization efforts at large in a campus environment.

In consultation with the Dean of the College of Humanities, the Director of the IELI put forward the TESOL self-study as the preferred alternative to guide the program's self- inquiry. The dean

concurred and the TESOL Self-study was adopted. The Board of Regents' evaluation criteria would be addressed where relevant, that is, with regard to the role of the program within the state's educational goals.

Perhaps the most direct motivation for pursuing the TESOL self-study came from within the IELI. At the invitation of the dean, the IELI lecturers developed criteria for promotion within the lecturer rank and produced a promotion procedure derived from criteria for professorial rank but which recognized the intensive teaching and advising load of the IELI teachers. This promotion document, along with annual role statements, individual professional development goals, and a collection of teaching-related materials (which eventually led to the development of teaching portfolios) formed the core of a set of documents that provided the basis for a critical examination of the faculty's contribution to the program. The TESOL self-study provided the IELI with the means to record some innovative program operations and to document teaching and program quality within the IEP.

Even with the program's comprehensive documentation, the consultants were unquestionably the most critical aspect of the entire process. They were responsible for analyzing the self-study data with expertise and knowledge of the ESL discipline, conducting campus interviews and visitations, and translating their data and the self-study into a form which could be read and understood by the university administration.

TESOL's Self-study Questions

After formal endorsement of the core standards, programs have taken different approaches to the TESOL self-study process. The approach of the IELI at Utah State University was to use the self-study questions as a framework for inquiry and to gather data from throughout the university to answer each question.

Assignments and Documentation. The director and assistant director met to discuss, formulate, and write the answers to the questions under Section A — program purpose and goals, and under Section B — administration. Sections on Support Services, Curriculum, Implementation, and parts of other sections were assigned to contracted staff who worked alone or in teams to

answer the questions and provide the necessary documentation. The office staff gathered the supporting documents on recruitment, internal policies (faculty promotion, student advising, university policies), and testing included in an appendix in the final report. Individual teachers, contracted and part-time, provided current syllabi and curriculum vitae. These and other faculty-produced documents were included in support of answers to the self-study questions.

Release Time. The IELI lecturers received no release time to complete the self-study. The assistant director who coordinated the curriculum description was released from the teaching of one class for one quarter to prepare a lengthy written description of the curriculum. Program self-assessment in preparation for mandated reviews is considered part of the regular departmental operation across the campus. However, in informal conversation with colleagues from other departments, the TESOL self-study appeared fairly unique in its requirement that faculty be participants in the process. A number of department heads reported that they had written their department's self-study and perhaps discussed it or circulated it to the faculty for editing. They responded to the university's 7-year review mandate without adding the burden of formal input to the already heavy teaching load of most of their faculty. However, the TESOL self-study's insistence on full faculty participation makes the final document a true collaboration and a more representative and accurate reflection of the workings of the program. Given that the teaching load of IEP professionals is often double or even triple the contact hours of other academics and the professional mandate for their involvement in the process, the arrangement of release time for key faculty working on the self-study should be pursued.

Use of Consultants

Consultants can be involved in the self-study process in a number of ways. They may work with the program at the beginning of the self-study to help structure the evaluation procedures and suggest appropriate types of data collection to provide a coherent picture of the program's operation and goals as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Consultants may also be

invited to solve particularly intractable problems during or after the self-study. For example, if an IEP is unable to predict student numbers within an acceptable margin, if budgetary models are inadequate, or if friction exists between an international student population and the local community, then TESOL and/or NAFSA experts can be solicited for these particular problems.

In a similar vein, both consultants and the TESOL self-study may be helpful when the implementation of a new program is considered. While the document can provide useful information on the ethical recruitment and education of international students, instructional and curricular quality, employment conditions, and basic administrative formats, consultants can assess innovative approaches as well as curricular changes and suggest goals and implementation strategies while the research and development process is underway. In short, the TESOL self-study and outside experts are flexible resources to be utilized at any of several stages in an ongoing program of self-evaluation. These two resources are helpful to any program involved in the self-study process.

Selection of Consultants

A procedure was in place for the selection of consultants at Utah State University. The program director provided the dean with a list of 5-10 consultants with curriculum vitae (CVs) attached and a half-page summary of the CV. The dean asked the IELI faculty to rank the consultants. After reviewing the CVs, the dean accepted the top two candidates recommended. He then assigned a faculty member from the Department of English to be the on-campus reviewer. When the chosen consultants were finally approved by the university administration, the Assistant Provost called the two consultants and invited each to participate and spend 2 full days on campus. The university paid for the travel and per diem expenses of the consultants along with a modest honorarium — the same amount paid to consultants across the campus in other disciplines — upon receipt of a formal written report.

An important principle in self-study is that the selection of the consultants be made with faculty input. The process should draw upon the collective network of colleagues known to the

professionals working in the IEP. An open discussion of the potential consultants' expertise should also occur. Faculty members may call colleagues in other programs and even the prospective consultants to measure their strengths against the IEP's goals and needs. Educational consultants should have a "reputation for fairness and thoroughness, familiarity with the program and institution in question, and a degree of objectivity" (Barak & Breier, 1990, pp. 84-85).

It is critical that the consultants be able to communicate effectively with international students and ESL teachers as well as university deans and presidents. A well-written, accurate report is also an extremely desirable product of the review team. The consultants must be able to write a document that attends to the identified issues as they were seen and judged. They must write a report which articulates the critical issues surrounding the intensive nature of IEP instruction and the needs of the international students to individuals familiar with more traditional educational programs, nonintensive learning outcomes, and largely American student populations. A well-written document and a successful site visit will, as Flanigan (1991) notes, "give another (outside) point of view and expand the discourse community" (p. 12).

Consultation Schedules

Preparations for the Site Visit. After being notified of their selection four months before their campus visit, the consultants were sent a list of important phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. One consultant was asked to head the team. He became responsible for coordinating the needs of the team and communicating these to the IELI Director. About one month before the site visit, the team was sent a copy of the completed TESOL self-study. Based on the team's reading of the self-study and in discussion with the director and the dean, a list of individuals to be interviewed was compiled. It included an initial meeting with the President, Vice President for Research, Provost, and Dean of the College of Humanities. This was followed by a meeting with the Dean and assistant deans in the College of Humanities where questions were raised which the review team would be asked to address in the course of their visitation.

The Director of the IELI contacted all the offices that the review team wanted to visit, made appointments, juggled the logistics of campus walking time, and fielded cancellations and changes during the three weeks prior to the team's arrival. The evening before the first day's meetings, the team met regarding the site visitation schedule and divided their responsibilities in order to have blocks of time available for their own meetings and discussions.

College and Departmental Interviews. After the visits with the central administration and the College of Humanities office (which the team had requested), the team visited the colleges and departments most affected by international students. Visits were scheduled with department heads in accounting, physics, computer science, biology, sociology, social work and anthropology. Appointments were also scheduled with the Deans of Business, Engineering, Humanities, and Science.

Other Campus Offices With International Involvement. Utah State University has a modest involvement in international projects which brings visiting scholars and graduate students to the university and to the IELI. The team, therefore, interviewed the Director of International Programs, the International Irrigation Center, and the Institute for International Rural and Community Development. Interviews were also held in the International Student Office and the Financial Aid Office. An interview was held with the international student representative of the Graduate Student Association and with the Vice Presidents for Student Services and for Research.

IELI Faculty and Students. About one week prior to the team's arrival, an advertisement was placed in the school newspaper inviting former and present IELI students to an open meeting with the review team. Additionally, the visit was announced in classes. All students in the IELI were invited to attend the informal meeting and respond to the interviewers' questions. At this meeting, light refreshments were served and no IELI faculty were present. The team members introduced themselves to the students, explained their mission, and interviewed small groups and individual students.

The IELI faculty met with the review team in several settings. A dinner was held at a local restaurant on the evening of

the team's arrival for all faculty (contracted and noncontracted), the IELI administration, and the team members. During the next 2 days, the review team conducted individual interviews from 15 to 45 minutes with contracted faculty behind closed doors. The part-time teachers met with the team over lunch to discuss their concerns. In all, the three members of the review team visited 37 teachers offices and thirty-five international students in 2 days at Utah State University.

The Exit Report. Just before leaving, the consultants presented their major findings to the college administrators and several members of the central administration. Unfortunately, the IELI Director was not invited to this meeting — an oversight for which the dean later apologized.

Exit reports are becoming fairly standard practice. They allow one last opportunity for dialogue between invited experts and administrators, teachers, and even interested students. The exit report should include all the stakeholders. It should be open to all who wish to attend, who might have final questions for the team, and who are interested in the outside perspective that consultants bring to the program. Clearly, not all issues are appropriate for an exit interview (e.g., personnel, salaries). The consultants, however, must tailor their concluding remarks to the audience and include findings on the more sensitive issues in a written report or in oral communication with all interested parties.

The Review Document

During their 2 1/2 days in Logan, the review team had time to meet with each other and begin a draft of their final document. About a week after they left, a draft of the report was sent to the IELI Director for "comments of a factual nature or omission only." Within 10 days, copies of the completed document had arrived in the Provost's office, the Dean's office, and the IELI office.

The document was divided into two main parts. After a gracious introduction and acknowledgement of help by the IELI and Utah State University, the document addressed institutional issues, termed "the international exchange environment at USU," and then issues specific to the IEP. The document produced by the

review team was a critical document in the IELI's history and development. It represented the first outside perspective by international experts on the IELI's operation, instruction, and goals. It was 21 pages long, single-spaced, and contained a number of formal recommendations after a discussion and synthesis of the team's findings. The team commented on the IELI faculty's professionalism, working conditions, compensation, status, part-time faculty, grading standards, curriculum, assessment, and fiscal issues.

The document contained a wealth of insights and information from highly regarded TESOL experts, though not entirely agreeable to everybody. This is the nature of such a document and one of the expected outcomes of the process. The self-study was undertaken in the spirit of critical inquiry for purposes of better serving the IELI program, faculty, and students — the ultimate recipients of program excellence. The review document translated the program's strengths, weaknesses, and goals for the wider audience of the institution, and it did so with respect for the ESL profession and the institutional context in which the IEP operates.

Consequences of the TESOL Self-study

New Teaching Positions. There were several concrete results of the self-study and the consultation visit. The IELI obtained permission from the university to advertise internationally and to hire two new lecturers. Ironically, the student population that justified the positions has continued to grow, so issues of class size, advising load, and release time have not been relieved by the addition of two new lecturers. However, with a new dean has come a new funding formula which may help alleviate the problem.

In response to workloads and release time issues highlighted by the report, the university has provided a ten-month leave with pay to two of the lecturers who are pursing doctorates at other institutions. The IELI faculty members who have expressed interest in doctoral work have been encouraged to submit a proposal for a special leave (i.e., nonsabbatical) with pay to the dean's office for consideration. The privilege of a leave with pay

is unprecedented for lecturers. For the present time, it has been provided for advanced study and not as a modicum of relief or opportunity for professional renewal for the career teachers teaching four quarters per year for more than 20 years in the program. Still, the institutional support of even 10 months toward a doctorate is a hopeful precedent for the IELI faculty and a recognition of the program's contribution to the university.

Status. In addition to the creation of two new positions, the dean expressed a willingness to review the status of the IELI Faculty II lecturers, although the immediate motivation was perhaps less the review team's document than some internal changes being debated for the Faculty Code. The review team termed the *Faculty II* of the IELI lecturers "a fiction" which perpetuated second class citizenship. The fact that the reviewers had made a written assertion about the status issue provided support for a change in faculty status in the university.

Curriculum. In interviewing the full-time and part-time faculty, the review team documented that not all teachers were equally committed to all aspects of the communicative curriculum. In fact, some were providing grammar instruction unrelated to communicative functions. This insight provided invaluable information to the program administrators who were ultimately responsible for the curriculum. The team suggested closer supervision of faculty and, the more helpful suggestion, a system of course coordinators — faculty with recognizable strengths in particular areas who are given release time to oversee the course content and its implementation. Regrettably, release time in the IELI has only been granted to administrators and never to faculty — those with four quarter contracts of full-time teaching (55 hours per year). The nature of intensive teaching and the needs of career professionals must constantly be impressed upon the administrators responsible.

Long-term Planning. One particular goal of the self-study process is to engage the IEP in long-term planning. As any IEP administrator will attest, the day-to-day operations of an IEP can be all-consuming. There are various student emergencies, political and familial crises in home countries, federal regulations to deal with, and then the more routine issues of curriculum and evaluation. Even curriculum development as well as student and

program evaluation take place in an intensive program context with speeded-up outcomes -- daily, year-round teaching with faculty teaching so many hours daily that staff meetings are often difficult to schedule within a normal working day. Such meetings are especially critical given the intensive nature of the teaching and the stresses of the international students.

Faculty Retreats. To allow the extended time necessary for long-term planning and to allow regular staff meetings to be a forum for more immediate issues, the IELI Director scheduled a 2-day retreat the week before classes started in September. By renting a place in the mountains about 100 miles from the university, the IELI faculty members were able to do some long-term planning, discuss program strengths and weaknesses, set annual goals, and begin an in-depth study of the curriculum. The faculty divided into groups to review texts and course goals, to look at program coherence, and to set individual and partnership agendas to be pursued during the year based on those goals. The retreat has become something of an annual event when the program can afford it, allowing the faculty and administrators valuable and concentrated time which otherwise is almost impossible to find in the daily operations of an IEP.

The TESOL self-study requires that an annual statement of goals be filed every year and that an assessment of the previous year's goals (both those met and those not) accompany it. At the retreat, these goals are discussed by the IELI lecturers who also participate in setting the new goals. Copies of the document are sent to the TESOL Central Office, to the Office of the Dean of the College of Humanities, and to the lecturers. The IELI faculty write annual role statements and outline individual professional goals for the year. The individual goal statement allows faculty members to dovetail their activities to program needs and goals, if they are so inclined. Where professional activities center around clearly specified program and curricular needs, curricular development and coherence are more likely to occur.

Miniretreats. In addition to an annual 2-day retreat, there is usually one day each quarter when students are released from classes while teachers meet to discuss issues of curriculum: articulation, innovation, texts, and philosophy. By creating an extended block of time once each quarter, the faculty is able to

address some of the curricular issues raised by the consultants and the self-study.

Absence of Models and Value of Consultants

Some reasons for the relatively unique institutional status of IEPs in U.S. higher education have been put forward elsewhere (see Staczek & Carkin, 1985). Status issues are relevant in evaluations because they reflect the absence of a uniform model — such as a department — on which to base an evaluation procedure. Middlebrook (1990) notes that even within IEPs there exists a variety of models responding to the different needs and interests of ESL students and teachers, program size, mission, funding, location and the like. Not only do IEPs differ from the traditional department in the delivery of instruction, but they also differ from each other. Hence, a question that an administrator might ask an evaluator to get an idea of how well the IEP being evaluated compares with sister IEPs may receive the following answer:

> It's true that the IEP at Institution A has about the same number of students as the IEP at Institution B; that both schools are around 18,000; that both enroll around 1,000 international students; that both are land-grant universities. However, in Institution A the IEP is located in Continuing Education, staffed by part-time teachers, and with exit criteria determined by performance on a national, standardized exam. In Institution B, the IEP is an academic program reporting to the Vice President of International Programs, staffed by contracted teachers, and granting undergraduate elective credit. Students who meet its stringent classroom performance goals move directly into the university.

Administrators who do not have familiar models from which to work are somewhat limited in their ability to make accurate and fair assessments. IEPs are unique entities in higher education. While many IEP administrators do an excellent job of educating the administrators to whom they report, the presence of an outside expert in the form of a program consultant is an

additional opportunity for corroboration and candid discussion of aspects of program quality.

Because IEPs operate somewhat differently than traditional departments in higher education, consultants who are well versed in institutional expectations can serve as "boundary spanners" (Barak & Breier, 1990) or professionals who interpret the IEP and its operations to the administration and who articulate the differences between the professional milieu in which an IEP operates and that in which more traditional departments operate. In other words, boundary spanners negotiate the arena of expectations. An effective IEP consultant should be a boundary spanner, able to talk to university administrators with varying agendas, varying degrees of knowledge about IEP operations, and varying levels of commitment to internationalization and the role of IEP students in the university. Likewise, the consultant might effectively translate some of the administration's concerns back to the program.

Some Last But Never Final Words

The self-study process is a tool for critical inquiry. It requires the IEP faculty to deal with a set of core questions, to respond to them thoughtfully, and to formulate plans and goals consensually. Any IEP can use TESOL's (1985) *Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs* and its 1986 *Standards and Self-study Questions for Postsecondary Programs* and address issues central to the quality of teaching and curriculum. The investment in time is generally compensated for by the benefits of the process. It involves all the teachers in focused reflection on the program, curriculum, and teaching as well as in setting goals and determining an appropriate course of action.

The decision to use a site review team is an issue which immediately involves the institution's administrative hierarchy. The knowledgeability of the hierarchy with regard to international students who are learning in an IEP format will vary. Many administrators will know the number of international students, the amount of tuition they pay, and to what degree they may be subsidized by the institution. Some will understand the need for

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special support and advising services. A few will have some insight into program placement and exit testing (beyond TOEFL), student outcomes, needs in intensive learning settings, and curricular issues. An even smaller number can be expected to understand the intensive nature of IEP teaching, advising, counseling, and scholarship along with attendant issues of faculty development, morale, and burnout. In reality, there is little professional literature on IEP program evaluation to inform them (with the exception of Barrett's (1982) and Pennington's (1991) volumes and selected articles from the *TESOL Quarterly* and *TESOL Newsletter*). Therefore, university administrators can be expected to invoke evaluation models and standards from more familiar academic endeavors, typically departments, and not programs or institutes, since departments are the central units for delivering instruction in universities. Departments deal with the number of majors, minors and service courses, the number of tenured and nontenured professors, and the like. IEPs are not accounted for in these ways and run the risk of being misidentified as something they are not and of being surrounded by expectations not germane to the profession.

There is also a key difference between the report of an on-site review team for an IEP and one for an academic department. Many university departments are associated with professional accrediting agencies which carry the power to accredit or to deny accreditation to the department. This is a measure of authority and quality control to which a college must respond in order to ensure the quality of its departments. However, neither the TESOL self-study nor the outside reviewers carry this kind of authority. The purpose of the self-study is to promote involvement in a process that examines numerous facets of program quality rather than to regulate standards.

In the absence of an accrediting body, a review team can bring outside perspectives, expertise, and credibility to an IEP. In order to ensure that those perspectives are welcomed and viewed as helpful to the IEP and its administering body, a careful orientation of the team to the institutional context should occur prior to their arrival. Likewise, the program director should apprise key administrators of the professional context in which IEPs operate. Sometimes the TESOL self-study is a university

administrator's first sense of the professional milieu in which IEPs operate, and the reviewers are the first ESL professionals outside the campus program. It is important, therefore, to select reviewers who will understand the distinctive needs of IEP students, the unique and demanding workload of IEP teachers, and the local political climate in which the IEP operates. They must persuasively and articulately represent the profession to a host of academics who may have their own ideas and attitudes about the role of English language study for international students, the qualifications for teaching the language in American universities, and the proper role of an IEP in a university.

6 Academic Program Review: A Focused Self-study

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With a heightened sense of consumerism in the American public has come the demand that institutions of higher education and the programs within these institutions be held accountable for the quality of their offerings and for the amount and way in which resources are used. As a result, academic program review, or the study of educational institutions or programs for purposes of improvement and/or accreditation, has become increasingly important in U.S. higher education. Some colleges and universities have implemented rigorous policies regarding academic program review at their institutions (Mangan, 1992). Some professional associations have set standards for review of academic programs in their respective fields. Recently, professional associations in the field of English language teaching have become active in promoting academic program review within educational institutions at all levels.

The distinguishing feature of academic program review is that the members of the program to be reviewed design and control the self-study process, whether it is initiated externally or internally. Conrad and Wilson (1985) state:

> Self-review or internal review probably is the dominant approach for evaluation in higher education. The tradition of internal self-evaluation is founded on the belief that program faculty best know the strengths and limitations of the program, and many institutions continue to make self-review the cornerstone of program review, especially when the major purpose of program review is to improve the program. Colleagues and universities operate on the assumption that departmental or program faculty...should be the primary reviewers. (p. 17)

Self-study as a means of academic program review is the focus of this chapter, with the terms *self-study* and *academic program review* used interchangeably.

There is considerable agreement in the literature on the factors that contribute to a successful academic program review or self-study process. Active participation of all those who are connected with the program under review is the attribute that researchers emphasize most frequently (Barak & Breier, 1990; Cochran & Hengstler, 1984; Conner & Hendricks, 1989). From the initial planning of an academic program review to the final report, it is important that the faculty feel a sense of ownership of the review process. Indeed, faculty must organize and direct the self-study themselves. In his research, Kells (1988) notes that "it appears that people who have been intimately involved in designing and coordinating self-studies are very enthusiastic about the benefits that result" (p. 64). He goes on to suggest that instead of isolating one or more committees to undertake the study alone, the whole faculty, guided by a steering committee, needs to participate in all phases of the review.

Internal motivation is as important as participation for the overall success of an academic review process. The most effective reviews are initiated by the participants themselves, not by an external entity. In a retrospective analysis of self-study processes employed in the 1970s during college and university institutional accreditation procedures, Kells (1988) found that internal motivation of the review process was one of only a few attributes "positively related to perceived satisfaction with the process" (p. 17). Further support for the importance of internal motivation in academic program review can be found in the work of Barak and Breier (1990), Cranton and Legge (1978), and Guba and Lincoln (1982).

Another attribute of successful reviews highlighted in the literature is the need for strong support from the directors of the program under review. Kells (1988) found that "perceived commitment of top leaders in the institution (or program) was significantly associated with perceived satisfaction" (p. 65).

Finally, open communication among all participants is a factor that is considered significant to the success of the review process. For example, frequent meetings to present fresh data and

plan future phases of the study are recommended. Moreover, several researchers stress that evaluation of the process of self-study itself should be included in the study. Wilson (1984) emphasizes the importance of metareview: "A strategy should be adopted for providing regular and ongoing feedback concerning the usefulness of evaluations" (1984, p. 154). Barak and Breier (1990) go further, warning of the consequences of not including meta-review in the academic review process: "...if the program review process is not continually evaluated, it will quickly become obsolete" (p. xiii).

A Case Study: The American Language Program

In the fall of 1988, the American Language Program of Columbia University undertook a focused self-study of its intensive English language program. The three-phase, 4-year process was initiated, conducted, and completely controlled by the faculty and staff. The American Language Program (ALP), which is the ESL division of Columbia University, was founded in 1911. It is part of the School of General Studies, which confers the baccalaureate degree on adult students (as opposed to Columbia College, which confers the BA on college-age students). The ALP offers noncredit and credit-bearing courses to students whose first language is not English. With 500-700 students enrolled each semester from more than 40 countries, the program offers an eight-level intensive English program, several part-time programs, a two-course sequence of credit-bearing freshman English, Winter and Summer Institutes, a pedagogy course for teaching assistants in the language departments, an English and pedagogy course for international teaching assistants, and special courses such as English for professional purposes: Law and Business. Students must have at least a high school education but many have college degrees and some have graduate degrees in their fields.

The ALP has a core of 18 full-time faculty members holding ranks of Senior Lecturer, Lecturer and Full-time Associate. Eight of these faculty members have either tenure or a 5-year rolling contract, which is a kind of permanence that has replaced tenure in some faculties of the University. The ALP governs itself through procedures and rules established in its

by-laws. Its chair, who reports to the Dean of the School of General Studies and the Provost of the University, is elected by the full-time faculty and the senior members of the part-time faculty. To introduce the program to visitors, the faculty often uses the phrase, Team, Theme and Academe. All of the ALP's intensive courses are taught by teams of three teachers; the curriculum is organized by theme with all language skills integrated into thematic contexts; and instructors prepare students with the language and skills needed to succeed in academic programs in the U.S.

Exploring the Idea of Self-study

Two major professional organizations in the field of English language teaching, TESOL and NAFSA, had suggested that their member programs undergo voluntary self-study processes. Thus, the faculty of the ALP decided to investigate the process. A four-member committee of faculty-administrators, faculty and staff explored the idea of self-study for the program. Some of the other committees established that year by the Chair of the ALP — Faculty Development, Instruction, and Student Life — would become more active as the process gathered momentum.

The Self-study Committee collected information about the review process to determine the purpose, procedures, and benefits of an internal review. The Committee also examined the differences between conducting a *focused* self-study, in which particular areas of a program are studied in-depth, and a *comprehensive* self-study, in which all aspects of a program are reviewed, as recommended by TESOL in its core standards and manuals (*Standards and Self-study Questions for Postsecondary Programs*, 1986; *Manual of Self-Study for TESOL and TESOL Professional Preparation Programs*, 1989). The Committee also interviewed colleagues at Columbia's Engineering School and at Teachers College (Akiyama et al., 1987a; Akiyama et al., 1987b) who had conducted self-studies. The Self-study Committee then presented a summary of this information to the faculty.

In a series of lively discussions, the faculty of the ALP identified various reasons for initiating a self-study. The program had never undergone a full-scale review since its founding. The number of students, teachers, and courses offered had grown

significantly in the previous twenty years. In the past 5 years, the program had experienced some organizational and curricular changes, including calendar changes and the addition of electives, the results of which had not been studied. The faculty was seriously committed to program improvement. The faculty hoped that a focused self-study would increase the ALP's visibility on campus and felt an obligation to cooperate with the efforts of TESOL and NAFSA to upgrade the status of university-based ESL programs and of which self-study was a part. Finally, Columbia University had established a policy of internal and external academic program review for its departments, although the process had not yet been applied to the School of General Studies.

Initiation of the Self-study

Aware of the importance of faculty ownership in a review process, members of the Self-study Committee discussed in detail the purposes and possible procedures of self-study with the whole faculty. Concerns about time and workload were voiced. Because the program had just instituted a 2-week residency period, the faculty agreed that sufficient time would be available to raise issues, formulate methods of data collection, collect and interpret data, and review policies. (The full-time faculty is required to be at the university to work on program development for 2 weeks of a 14-week semester.) The Self-study Committee, which had already familiarized itself with some of the literature on academic program review, agreed to guide the research with the understanding that the whole faculty would be actively involved in discussions of scope, goals, and procedures. In this way, the idea was to operate, as Kells suggests, with a modified committee of the whole, including but not overburdening the whole faculty. All members of the faculty voted unanimously to undertake the self-study, feeling it would be a valuable and timely project. They also decided that a focused self-study, an in-depth investigation of key issues rather than an overview of all aspects, would best suit the Program's purposes.

The Self-study Committee envisioned a study lasting 4 years, or eight residency periods, though the faculty acknowledged the probable need for metareview, in which it would determine the

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appropriateness of the projected scope of the study. Although it appeared that a combination of evaluation models would eventually be used, a goal-based model was chosen to inititate the study because it seemed the most straightforward. To identify the areas of need for a focused study, the Committee drew up a document fully articulating the mission and goals of the program. This document was used to determine to what extent the program was fulfilling its goals.

After gathering and examining all of the printed material about the program over a period of weeks, the Self-study Committee wrote the first draft of the program's mission, goals, and means of reaching those goals. The Committee organized the 11-page document into eight main categories: (1) Structure and Content of Courses, (2) Philosophy and Methodology, (3) Resources for Students, (4) Faculty, (5) Faculty Development and Scholarship, (6) Service, (7) Staff, and (8) University Governance and Support. During the next 2-week residency period, this first draft was presented to the faculty. Through numerous small and whole-group discussions, the faculty proceeded to revise the mission and goal statement seven times. It was an exciting way to begin, as everyone had a stake in describing the program accurately. This sense of ownership may explain why the faculty was able to sustain its enthusiasm throughout the 4-year process.

With a final mission and goal statement in hand, the faculty discussed which of the goals might be the most fruitful to examine in a focused self-study. A majority of the faculty was concerned about structure and content of courses, in particular, and whether or not the ALP provided "a coordinated series of courses," as stated in the program's goals. Although a thematic approach is used by most teachers, the ALP has no rigidly prescribed curriculum. Teachers are strongly encouraged to develop original materials appropriate to each particular group of students. As a result, coordination is an essential and ongoing task of the faculty.

Thus, the faculty decided to begin its study with an examination of the curriculum of the eight levels of the ALP's intensive English program as well as the related questions of placement procedures, promotion policies, skill and content focus of the various levels, and teacher collaboration. With this decision, the faculty focused its study on TESOL's third area in the *Core*

Standards, Program Curriculum (*Standards and Self-study Questions for Postsecondary Programs*). The Self-study Committee's task was to determine the means by which these questions could be answered. Thus, the preliminaries were completed and the first phase of the focused self-study began.

Phase 1: Do We Provide a Coordinated Series of Courses?

In the next residency period, the faculty reviewed research suggestions made by the Self-study Committee and then, working in groups, developed questionnaires and forms with which to collect data to help compare the Program's goal of a coordinated series of courses with its current practice. The faculty wrote five data collection instruments: Weekly Curriculum Report, Promotion Questionnaire to Faculty, Promotion Chart, Information Sharing Questionnaire to Faculty, and Student Interview Protocol.

The purpose of the Weekly Curriculum Report was to record and examine the curriculum taught at each level in the intensive program during one given semester. All teachers on the faculty completed a weekly report for each of the 12 weeks of the semester. In order to investigate specific themes/content, skill and grammar focus, teacher materials, textbook use and relative time allotment for the activities, teachers used the forms to report the details of their lessons to the Self-study Committee. These Weekly Curriculum Reports were later used to disseminate lists of information to the faculty about the themes and grammatical points taught and the textbooks used on the various levels in order to identify overlapping or neglected areas in the curriculum. From these lists, a list of frequently used themes was created for each level. The list served to inform faculty of themes utilized at the different levels (e.g., nutrition and food on Level 4 and endangered species on Level 8) and to help avoid overlap. A chart illustrating repetition or continuation of grammatical points taught from level to level was also developed. After a faculty discussion, it became apparent that grammar was treated differently at the various levels. Rather than problematic, the repetition that was identified during the study was viewed as necessary for mastery.

The Promotion Questionnaire to Faculty was devised to investigate teacher promotion criteria. There is no standardized

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exit testing in the ALP's intensive program. Faculty members administer their own final exams and make promotion decisions. As a result, some faculty members were concerned that some students were being promoted beyond their level of competence. Data collected on the questionnaire raised issues about overpromotion (especially in the Summer Institute), differing criteria, and rate of promotion at the various levels. After a faculty discussion, members of the Committee on Instruction decided to investigate the issues further and draft a promotion policy to guide teachers.

The purpose of the Promotion Chart, compiled by the staff person on the Self-study Committee, was to plot actual student promotions over several semesters. These data revealed a tendency to promote students more quickly (more than one level) at the lower and higher levels than at the intermediate levels, where students were typically promoted only one level after one semester of study. These differences led to discussions, which are ongoing, about the advisability of establishing policies and/or generic descriptions of students at each level.

The Information Sharing Questionnaire to Faculty was devised to gather data about communication among teachers and their knowledge of the overall structure of the program. Because students are instructed by teams of three teachers in the ALP's intensive program, there was concern about the information sharing process among teachers working at different levels. To investigate this aspect of coordination, the Self-study Committee decided to ask teachers how much they knew about the curriculum and goals of the eight levels of the program and about what other faculty were doing. As might be expected, part-time faculty teaching in the program felt the least informed. In addition, many faculty members expressed dissatisfaction over the program's in-service training workshops.

As a means of finding out whether the ALP students believed that the levels of the program were well coordinated, faculty members volunteered to conduct interviews with students who had moved through at least three levels of the program, using the Student Interview Protocol. The 13 students who were interviewed expressed satisfaction with their experience and the increasing demands that the levels had placed on them. The

Self-study Committee decided, however, that a more comprehensive program evaluation by the students should be undertaken. (This later became part of Phase 3 of this study.)

Phase 2: Do We Provide Adequate Educational Resources and Are They Used Effectively by our Students?

Having concluded the major part of the study on the structure and content of the ALP's courses in three semesters, the faculty reviewed the goal and mission statement to help select the next area for self-study: student resources. The members of the faculty decided to investigate the educational resources available outside of class for advanced study or remediation and for educational planning or exploration of individual interests, thus shifting their focus of study to the Support Services subsection of TESOL's first area of the Core Standands, Program Structure (*Standards and Self-study Questions for Postsecondary Programs*). These resources might be provided by the program itself or by other parts of the University. The Self-study Committee developed two questionnaires and an interview protocol for gathering data about the frequency of use and perceived effectiveness of resources for ALP students.

The Student Questionnaire and Faculty Questionnaire on Student Resources were used to gather opinions about the ALP's labs (audio, video, reading, and writing labs), electives, special courses (e.g., TOEFL Preparation, Pronunciation and Fluency Workshops), and other resources (Independent Study Center, ALP Student Library, counseling services within the Student Health Organization). The data revealed that students were relatively satisified with the program's audio labs, but not with the video labs. Insufficient teacher presence in the lab was the principal reason. The Questionnaire also confirmed that the ALP students wanted more opportunities to meet other students on campus. As evidenced in the Faculty Questionnaire, teachers shared these concerns and had others as well: all faculty felt that the elective system was functioning well on the advanced levels but needed reconsideration at the intermediate levels. Another concern was that upper level students needed more systematic instruction in pronunciation.

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Through interviews with University administrators, the Self-study Committee investigated the University resources available for the ESL students, particularly those relating to tutoring and advisement. The Committee interviewed University personnel (academic and international student advisers, deans of students) on this question and made a description of these out-of-program resources available to all faculty. With this activity, the second phase of the study was brought to a close. The investigation of student resources had taken three semesters.

At this point, the Committee took time to conduct a meta-review of the self-study. A member of the Self-study Committee interviewed a number of faculty members about the process. Overall, the response was positive. One person emphasized a new sense of collegiality emanating from the process: "I like the collegiality aspect of self-study. I think it does help the morale — the esprit de corps — and our sense of professionalism..." Another focused on the discussions engendered by the process: "Discussion of the data is probably more important than what the data first say...and that's what I like..." Still another highlighted the aspect of professional growth:

> I feel that one of the big problems in teaching is stasis, feeling like you've learned it and then turning off. If you see growth as a professional challenge, you can set your agenda based on your practice and go ahead with it. And I think that self-study...has been a way of doing that as a program and as individuals.

Some cautionary notes were also sounded. One faculty member said: "A dangerous tendency that I see...is that everything seems to be put in committees now,...and I think that a lot of information that was gained initially in self-study is now going to become lost in committees." This pause to review the study encouraged the faculty and staff to continue with it, and they embarked on the third and final phase with a fresh sense of confidence and accomplishment.

Phase 3: How Do Students and Faculty Feel About the Program?

In the third and final phase of this focused self-study, the Self-study Committee moved from a goal-based model to a responsive model of academic program review. To this point, the study had compared specific aspects of curriculum and student resources to the program's mission and goal statement, but several faculty members expressed a need to examine the participants' perspective more closely. What was the students' experience from first learning about the ALP to finishing an ALP English language course? How did the faculty, both part-time and full-time, feel about working in the program? To gather data on the stakeholders' viewpoint, two instruments were designed: a questionnaire for students and an interview protocol for faculty.

The questionnaire, Student Evaluation of the Intensive Program, was designed to elicit the intensive students' views of their whole experience in the program. On it, they evaluated such aspects as the program brochure, the registration procedure, campus life, and so on. Some of the complaints expressed on this questionnaire were already being addressed by the time the results were tallied (e.g., the need for monitors in the video lab), while others involved University constraints (e.g., class size, classroom availability and physical condition). These data revealed that most students were unaware of the campus resources such as information about visas, schedules of campus activities, and so on.

Having given students a chance to evaluate the whole program, it was felt that the faculty should have the same opportunity. The Self-study Committee designed an open-ended and holistic interview protocol, Faculty Evaluation of the program, and interviewed all part-time and full-time faculty as to who should make policy decisions, the philosophy and methodology of the ALP, the ALP within the larger context of the School of General Studies and the University, and so on. Aside from the pleasure of discussing issues of mutual concern with colleagues, these interviews revealed the faculty's sensitivity to the demands of teamwork and to the tensions between professional autonomy and coordination as well as governance by committee and by faculty-administrators.

Results of the Focused Self-study

The faculty and staff of the ALP undertook a focused self-study for the primary purpose of self-improvement. As had been hoped, after three specific areas of the program had been closely reviewed (curriculum, resources, and student/faculty impressions), a number of changes in the program were made. Many of these improvements are documented in the ALP's final report, which was distributed to officials of the University, TESOL, NAFSA, and other interested colleagues. What had not been foreseen was that the study would also stimulate significant growth in the faculty as professionals and colleagues. Both these anticipated and unanticipated results affected change.

As a result of the first phase of the focused self-study, some changes were made in the area of the Structure and Content of courses. To ensure that the program offers and continues to offer a coordinated series of courses, a more formal means of communicating among the faculty about curriculum was designed. For this purpose, office space was set aside for a Teacher Resource Center and its shelves stocked with booklets describing the curricular resources available for each level (curriculum guides), summaries of the specific curriculum taught in each class in the preceding semester (materials used forms), a booklet with descriptions and samples of student compositions at the various levels (The ALP writing guide), a number of textbooks recommended for each level, and so on. To improve coordination, ways of encouraging faculty to expand their expertise in the program (Resources for Learning New Levels) were formalized. Faculty workshops on such subjects as pronunciation, error correction, and curriculum of special courses became an integral part of the semester. The faculty explicitly defined the purpose of the weekly team or level meeting to include information-sharing about the particular class as well as the program in general. Finally, as a step toward coordinating promotion criteria, the faculty set up group readings of compositions and reading exchanges among interested teachers.

In the area of Resources for Students, the focus of the second phase of the self-study, a number of major modifications were made, particularly regarding the lab component of the

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program: Video lab books were edited and monitors were hired; the reading lab was completely changed to include current periodicals with teacher-made exercises; and the upper level writing lab was expanded with better computers and professional instruction. Electives in the intensive program were restructured: discontinued on Level 4 but strengthened on Levels 5 through 8, with a new taxonomy of courses to appeal to students and guide teachers. The Student Life Committee redefined the program's responsibility toward students to include more systematic dissemination of information about resources and more active organization of social events involving the ALP students as well as other University students. For students with severe pronunciation problems, a special class was established and taught by a faculty member twice a week at no additional cost to students.

As a result of the third and final phase of the focused self-study, student and faculty evaluation of the whole program, several other changes were made. The administration streamlined registration procedures, also benefiting from University modifications in this direction. For current and future teachers in the program, the faculty wrote an ALP Faculty Handbook including, for example, a clearly articulated policy on administrative observations and on stipends for conference attendance, two issues of widespread concern. Some of the changes recommended by students and faculty, however, were beyond the program's purview. The ALP administration could not change the University policy on parental leave, increase conference stipends to the level enjoyed by other University faculty, or secure more office space for the program.

Perhaps the less tangible results of self-study had an even greater impact on the program. New administrative documents and improved curricula are only the outward manifestation of a more profound and longer lasting professionalization process. The members of the faculty became more unified, more articulate about goals, policies, and procedures, better organized, more sensitive to the students' needs, and more aware of their role as faculty citizens in the University and professional communities. Faculty members realized and accepted with enthusiasm the challenge of faculty development as a major program function. As individual professionals, many of the faculty members honed research skills,

expanded their knowledge of the literature, and became more aware of the interests and strengths of their colleagues. Above all, a new attitude towards professional development was cultivated: Many faculty members became reflective practitioners (Schon, 1983), taking responsibility for posing as well as solving problems of interest for their personal growth.

Discussion

The defining characteristic of this academic program review was undoubtedly self-governance: ALP faculty and staff initiated, designed, and controlled the self-study from beginning to end. It was a focused review concentrating on curriculum, student resources and student/faculty impressions. It was an *institutional review*, in Kells' terms, since the main purpose was program improvement and reallocation of resources. However, as Kells also suggests, other purposes may be served by the academic review process, and the ALP certainly did have as a secondary purpose the fulfillment of professional standards set by TESOL, NAFSA, and the University.

On reflection, it appears that this self-study was characterized by the attributes highlighted in the literature. Certainly active participation and internal motivation were its hallmarks; the study enjoyed the support of the ALP chair and the Dean of the School of General Studies; and open communication was maintained throughout with written documents and frequent meetings. In addition to these attributes, the faculty believe the ALP self-study was successful because it was conceived and carried out as a project of the entire faculty with adequate residency time allocated for it from the beginning and an active Self-study Committee to steer it throughout.

On the other hand, neither the literature nor this case study suggests that the process is uniformly smooth. Resistance from faculty was sometimes felt and, at times, faculty members experienced fatigue as they faced another round of data collection and interpretation. However, the process was not derailed by these complaints largely because it contained within itself a forum for their expression. Several faculty members might echo the sentiments expressed by this one:

> I really thought from the way self-study was described at the beginning that it was sort of like 1960s consciousness-raising with a kind of Mickey Mouse element to it, but I didn't think of it as really doing much in a positive sense at all. And as it went along I think I could say that I certainly found more and more things that I thought were of benefit. I think that what happened to me is also what happened to a lot of other people: we have become more respectful of the process....participate more seriously in it, and I think we get more benefit from it.

As this comment suggests, the self-study research and the faculty's perception of it developed and grew. The metareview, from which these words are taken, helped the faculty take stock and refresh the process.

As already noted, this academic program review utilized more than one research model. The Self-study Committee began its work, as the goal-based model suggests, by formulating a mission and goals statement. This document mapped the known territory and provided a secure starting point for the journey. With it, the faculty was able to compare current practice in two main areas, curriculum coordination and student resources, to the program's theoretical ideal. Once confidence was gained in the self-study process, the faculty was able to depart from the map, venturing into unknown territory with the responsive model. The investigation of student and teacher concerns yielded a rich body of qualitative data to which the faculty and staff are still responding. As the final phase of this focused self-study drew to a close, the Self-study Committee proposed inviting an outside consultant to review the program's self-study report. Unfortunately, this final phase came at a time of fiscal crisis at the University, and the program was unable to finance such an undertaking. Now, as the University and U.S. higher education in general enter a period of retrenchment, recent discussions about the program have begun to focus on certain decisions that need to be made, such as issues regarding faculty retention and breadth of course offerings. The administration anticipates using the accumulated knowledge and experience in order to apply a decision-making model.

In sum, the self-study energized and empowered the faculty, ultimately branching out to affect almost all aspects of its work in the program. It is no longer possible to distinguish the origin of projects now in the hands of such faculty committees as Faculty Development, Student Life, Instruction, and so on. Perhaps the fact that the Self-study Committee has gradually ceded its role as prime catalyst for review and change is the most significant result of all: It means that the notion of self-study has been absorbed into the fabric of the program, becoming part of what the faculty members do and who they are as professionals.

Conclusion

The growth of self-study as a means of academic program review corresponds to the rise of the notion of accountability in higher education. Indeed, the literature emphasizes self-study as a means of program improvement and evaluation. What is less emphasized in the literature and merits further study is the effect of self-study on those who choose to initiate and carry out such a process. The most dramatic results of this study were precisely those affecting the faculty members who carried it out. In the process of devising ways to study and improve the program, the faculty also improved itself: it became more fully realized as a group of professionals. Educating the educators seems an entirely appropriate function of the academy as well as one certain to relate to overall improvement of the quality of academic programs.

As the field of ESOL matures, it is significant that more programs are turning to self-study to define, evaluate, and improve themselves. Colleagues can be encouraged to involve themselves in an in-depth, lengthy, and creative self-study rather than a cursory and formulaic one. The ALP's experience with a focused self-study shows that this kind of research can become an influential learning experience for the individual, the program, and the profession as a whole. The links among these experiences may be a fruitful area for further research.

PART THREE:

HELPFUL HINTS

7 Do's and Don'ts for Conducting a Self-Study

Ten Do's for Conducting a Self-study

Alexandra Rowe Henry, Jim Hamrick, and Karen Porter
University of South Carolina

1. Use computers.

2. Use bottom-up management of project.

3. Set a timeline for accomplishing steps of the process and stick to it, but be flexible. (See don't #1.)

4. Involve as many people as possible so as to engender ownership.

5. Allow the coordinator release time. Invest in the project. Convince administration to do so.

6. Keep all apprised of results as they are developed. This keeps everyone involved and allows changes to be made in an ongoing fashion.

7. Have an implementation plan.

8. Use support of office staff where possible.

9. Prioritize recommendations to impose order on them.

10. Make use of student data. Keep your eyes open for all kinds of data.

Ten Don'ts for Conducting a Self-study

Alexandra Rowe Henry, Jim Hamrick, and Karen Porter
University of South Carolina

1. Don't set unrealistic time-goals. Don't allow deadlines to be too dictatorial.

2. Don't try to implement recommendations until the completion of the self-study process.

3. Don't address all parts of self-study at once.

4. Don't assign just a few people to do a self-study.

5. Don't put people in the same workgroup if they don't get along.

6. Don't try to control less important aspects of study, such as formatting, meeting times, work procedures. (Allow freedom of expression.)

7. Don't be too bound to TESOL questions; they are just points of departure for discussion.

8. Don't use the term *weakness*.

9. Don't dwell on minor flaws. Don't try to describe every single little curricular nuance.

10. Don't expect to have any free time during the process.

Ten Do's for Conducting a Self-study

Norman Evans
Brigham Young University-Hawaii

1. Get key administrative support before beginning.

2. Involve many people in and out of the program throughout the entire process.

3. Set desired goals and outcomes before beginning.

4. Customize TESOL materials to meet your program's needs. They should be used as suggestions not commandments.

5. Expect to take time. A thorough self-study can not be rushed.

6. Set realistic timelines. Projects will tend to take more time than you think.

7. Plan periodic breaks to evaluate and reassess the self-study's direction, purpose, and objectives.

8. Keep people who are involved well informed of progress and accomplishments.

9. Use TESOL as a resource. The self-study materials and the Central Office staff will be invaluable in the process.

10. Include an implementation timetable that can be used to measure progress and keep the self-study alive long after the initial stages.

Ten Don'ts for Conducting a Self-study

Norman Evans,
Brigham Young University-Hawaii

1. Don't try to make changes immediately. Get the whole picture before changes are made.

2. Don't underestimate who might be interested or have good suggestions when compiling names of people who might be involved in the process.

3. Don't expect self-study to be an exercise in checking boxes and answering a few questions. A thorough self-study is not a formulaic accreditation exercise.

4. Don't restrict participation. Include as many people as the situation will allow.

5. Don't make any aspect of the process secret. Be open with everyone.

6. Don't shortcut the process. Ownership, unity, and program strength are developed through the process.

7. Don't expect people to do a self-study as a usual program committee assignment. It will require extra time and money if it is done well.

8. Don't hesitate to take a break. Patience and understanding will wear thin at times.

9. Don't let the study focus on individuals and personalities. Keep it focused on the program.

10. Don't say your self-study is finished. Self-study is an attitude of improvement; it is never really finished.

Ten Do's for Conducting a Self-study

Susan Carkin,
Utah State University

1. Consider the local institutional context.

2. Involve the IEP staff and teachers, whether contracted or not.

3. Learn the protocol for the use of consultants at your institution.

4. Notify the potential consultants well in advance (6-12 months), if your institution requires a list of several consultants from which one or two are chosen.

5. Provide the consultants with each other's addresses, faxes, phone numbers, and e-mail so that they can work with each other prior to arrival on campus.

6. Provide the consultants with a copy of your self-study at least 1 month (2 months is better) prior to their arrival.

7. Negotiate with the consultants regarding key figures with whom to schedule campus visits.

8. Determine whether your institution expects an informal presentation of the team's findings before they leave — a kind of "exit report" given orally and focusing on a few main points and findings.

9. Schedule the team so that they can reasonably meet with the people they need to see and still have time to meet as a team.

10. The IEP Director should be available to the team at work and at home, as well as prior to and following their visit.

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Ten Don'ts for Conducting a Self-study

Susan Carkin,
Utah State University

1. Don't work without an agenda agreed upon by all participants.

2. Don't choose a consultant who is famous over one who has some depth of knowledge or experience in your main areas of concern.

3. Don't select the consultants without considering the input of the IEP faculty.

4. Don't invite a consultant who is intimidated by deans and presidents or unable to communicate effectively with international students and teachers.

5. Don't neglect the part-time teachers.

6. Don't dismiss any information you receive from the team.

7. Don't hold unreasonable expectations for the results of the review team.

8. Don't forget to keep immediate supervisors and interested administrators apprised of your goal setting and progress by sending them a copy of the annual report filed with TESOL.

9. Don't expect a single consultant to be an effective voice for IEP concerns within a large institutional setting.

10. Don't forget that the follow through of the Self-study is critical to its success: Make the review team's report available to all who participated; implement long and short-term planning.

Ten Do's for Conducting a Self-study

Carol Numrich, Frances Boyd, and Mary Jerome,
Columbia University

1. Use TESOL's self-study guidelines as a springboard.

2. Get release time or compensation for faculty or program staff who spend a lot of time on the study.

3. Have support from senior administrators in the university. If the chair, dean, etc. are not keen on the idea, the self-study will suffer.

4. Involve all members of the faculty (part-time, full-time), administration (chair, coordinators, senior faculty), and staff (office manager, secretaries) in the self-study.

5. Use an outside consultant to review your progress, somewhere at mid-point if possible.

6. Plan a metareview for reflection on the self-study process itself.

7. Follow a variety of models for self-study (goal-based, responsive, decision-making, connoisseurship) as needs change.

8. Use the self-study as a means for identifying new leaders in your program.

9. Start making changes in your program immediately, once problems have been identified.

10. Hold regular meetings at which faculty and staff members can voice opinions and frustrations.

Ten Don'ts for Conducting a Self-study

Carol Numrich, Frances Boyd, and Mary Jerome,
Columbia University

1. Don't wait until the end of the study to act on the data. Problem solving should occur throughout the study.

2. Don't focus on only negative or unresolvable issues to conduct a study. An open, positive approach to a study is more beneficial in the long run.

3. Don't allow the self-study to lose steam — change the focus to add variety to your review and keep people motivated.

4. Don't get caught up in the data collection. Keep the questioning, tallying, and problem solving to a manageable minimum.

5. Don't rush. Some self-studies could take place over several years.

6. Don't see self-study as a completed project once the report is written. Keep it alive by integrating it into what your program always does.

7. Don't hesitate to call on the TESOL Central Office for guidance and support.

8. Don't see TESOL's guidelines as a blueprint — the self-study must be generated from the members of the institution involved.

9. Don't delegate too much. There should be a core group or committee that oversees the self-study throughout the process.

10. Don't be tied to reaching all goals in the study. They will change, and flexibility will be necessary.

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